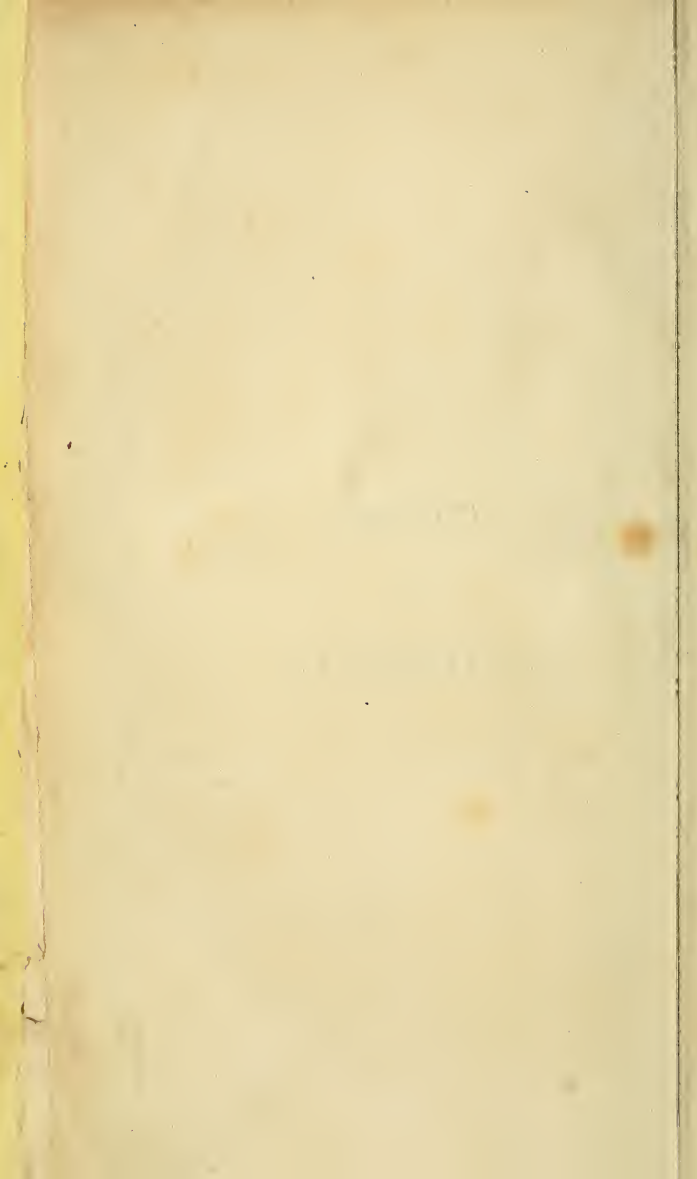


Thomas F. Torrance

SCS #1073

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COURSE
OF
LECTURES, &c.



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LECTURES
ON THE
NATURE, LAWFULNESS, DUTY AND
ADVANTAGES
OF
CIVIL ESTABLISHMENTS OF RELIGION,
WITH AN APPLICATION OF THE ARGUMENT
TO THE
PAROCHIAL ECONOMY OF SCOTLAND;
DELIVERED IN EDINBURGH, AT THE REQUEST OF THE "EDINBURGH YOUNG
MEN'S ASSOCIATION FOR PROMOTING THE INTERESTS OF
THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND."
WITH A PREFATORY DISCOURSE,
CONTAINING
A GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE CASE.

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CONTENTS.

PREFATORY DISCOURSE,

Containing a General Statement of the Case on behalf of National Religious Establishments.—pp. 87.

By the Rev. JAMES BUCHANAN, Minister of North Leith.

J.C.

LECTURE I.

On the nature and lawfulness of Union between Church and State—the reciprocal independence of the two societies,—and the possibility of their alliance, on certain terms, without compromise of that independence. The idea of a right and legitimate alliance.—pp. 70.

Delivered by the Rev. WILLIAM CUNNINGHAM, Minister of Trinity College Parish, Edinburgh.—Nov. 27, 1834.

J.C.

LECTURE II.

On the lawfulness of the Church accepting an endowment from the State, in entire consistency with her own proper spiritual character, and the scriptural method of her support:—against two objections; the *first* taken from such texts as John xviii. 36, “My kingdom is not of this world;” the *second*, from 1 Cor. ix. 14, regarding the ordinance of God for the maintenance of his ministers.—pp. 30.

Delivered by the Rev. JOHN BRUCE, A. M., Minister of the New North Parish, Edinburgh.—Dec. 11, 1834.

J.C.

LECTURE III.

On the right of the Civil Magistrate to expend the Public Funds in support of the Church, and the duty of the subject to acquiesce in the exercise of that right:—in answer to the objection from the alleged hardship, and injustice, and persecution of levying contributions from the public generally, for the maintenance of a particular form of religion.—pp. 38.

Delivered by the Rev. JAMES LEWIS, Minister of St. John's Parish, Leith.—Jan. 9, 1835.

LECTURE IV.

On the duty of the *State*, as an ordinance of God, in reference to his *Church*, to acknowledge, to protect, to support the Church. These obligations, limited and defined, on the one hand, by the private rights of conscience; sanctioned and enforced, on the other, by Divine authority, which recognises Civil Government as appointed by God, for his own glory, and the good of man. The argument vindicated against the objection, that it warrants and recommends persecution.——The obligation of the *Church* to encourage and assist the *State* in the discharge of this duty.—pp. 26.

Delivered by the Rev. CHARLES J. BROWN, Minister of Anderston Parish, Glasgow.—Jan. 23, 1835.

LECTURE V.

On the advantages which the *Church* derives from an alliance with the *State*, in the decent respect and reverence secured to the Institutions of Religion.—pp. 44.

Delivered by the Rev. R. S. CANDLISH, Minister of St. George's Parish, Edinburgh.—Feb. 3, 1835.

LECTURE VI.

On the advantages which the *Church* derives from her union with the *State*, in the extension of her means and resources. The impotency and insufficiency of the Voluntary principle, as exemplified,

1st, Abroad, in America; 2d, At home, in the Highlands and large towns of Scotland.—pp. 53.

Delivered by the Rev. JOHN PAUL, Minister of St. Cuthbert's Parish, Edinburgh.—Feb. 19, 1835.

LECTURE VII.

On the advantages which the *Church* derives from an alliance with the *State*, in the independence secured to her Ministers. (The tendency of the Voluntary principle to foster errors and corruptions, through the subserviency and ambition of the clergy, as illustrated by the early history of the Church.)—pp. 45.

Delivered by the Rev. JAMES M. McCULLOCH, A. M., Minister of Kelso.—March 6, 1835.

LECTURE VIII.

On the advantages resulting to the *State* from the Civil Establishment of the true religion, 1st, *Directly*, in the improvement of public morals, as tending immediately to attain the great ends of every State, the good order and happiness of the subjects. 2d, *Indirectly*, in the superior efficacy of a religious establishment, as compared with the other more imperfect and expensive instruments of Government, which it tends to supersede:—especially in the prevention, by its means, of crime and pauperism, so as to lessen the burden of those criminal, and police, and poor laws, which must always be more or less vexatious in their operation, and demoralizing in their influence.—pp. 64.

Delivered by the Rev. JOHN B. PATTERSON, A. M., Minister of Falkirk.—March 19, 1835.

LECTURE IX.

On the union between the Church and the State, as it exists in Scotland, by the Civil and Ecclesiastical Constitution of that country, embracing these two questions:—1st, How far the Church of Scotland is indebted to the State for support, pecuniary or otherwise

—how far the maintainance of the Church, by means of her own property, is really burdensome to the public? and, 2d, How far the Church of Scotland has succeeded in preserving her just rights and privileges unimpaired, by the conditions of her Civil Establishment.—pp. 44.

*Delivered by ALEXANDER DUNLOP, Esquire, Advocate,
Edinburgh.—March 27, 1835.*

LECTURE X.

On the original excellence of the Parochial Economy, and its fitness to promote the ends of a Scriptural Union between the Church and the State.—pp. 68.

*Delivered by the Rev. JOHN G. LORIMER, One of the
Ministers of Glasgow.—April 2, 1835.* *St. Andrew's*

LECTURE XI.

On the causes of departure from that Parochial Economy, and the evils of that departure, especially in large towns.—pp. 47.

Delivered by the Rev. Rt. LEE, Minister of Arbroath.—April 10, 1835.

LECTURE XII.

On the means of promoting a return to that economy,—the subdivision of parishes,—the necessity of endowments, and of rendering these endowments effectual for their legitimate object, the admission of all classes to the benefits of the established worship, without the burden of high seat rents:—The present condition and prospects of the Church of Scotland considered, in reference to this object:—the true character, and the highest dignity of that Church, as pre-eminently the Church of the PEOPLE, the Church of the POOR.—pp. 48.

*Delivered by the Rev. ANDREW GRAY, Minister of Woodside Church,
Aberdeen.—April 30, 1835.*

INDEX.

	LECTURE.	PAGE.
ALLIANCE may subsist betwixt two bodies essentially different, without interfering with the independence of either, ...	Pref. Disc. 6, 7, and I. 19	
— terms and conditions on which there may be, betwixt Church and State,	Pref. Disc. 14—16	
— consequences of dissolving, ...	I. 55—58	
America, no National Establishment in, but still a connection betwixt Church and State, ...	Pref. Disc. 35 & I. 39—42 & VIII. 19	
— the inefficacy of the Voluntary principle there, ...	VI. 32—41 and XII. 13	
— Revivals in, no proof in support of Voluntaryism, ...	VI. 41—44	
— Patronage exists in Churches of, ...	IX. 26—28	
Assembly General, the presence of the Commissioner in, no interference with Ecclesiastical matters, ...	— 41 and Pref. Disc. 60	
Authority, nothing in the nature or necessary exercise of, inapplicable to religious ends as a <i>Talent</i> , ...	— 51—54	
BLASPHEMY, <i>notorious</i> , may be prevented by the Magistrate, ...	V. 6, 7,	

	LECTURE.	PAGE.
BLASPHEMY, notorious, to prevent, implies no persecution for religious opinions, but only a restriction similar to what is required in regard to political opinions, ...	V.	8—10
———— prevented by Magistrate on religious considerations, ...	—	11—14
CHURCH, what it is, ...	Pref. Disc.	6
———— Ditto, ...	I.	10—11
———— character of a rightly Established, ...	IX.	22
———— in what it essentially differs from the State, ...	Pref. Disc.	8
———— in what it is independent, ...	—	9—10
———— in what its <i>ends</i> are common with those of ditto, ...	—	10, 11
———— in what its <i>means</i> are common, ...	—	12
———— the rights to be asserted by her, ...	Pref. Disc.	15
———— viewed in conjunction with the State, ...	I.	16
———— the possibility of an alliance with State, ...	Pref. Disc.	14—17
———— abuses in, no argument against such an alliance, ...	—	17—20
———— her spiritual nature no objection to a union, and not necessarily secularized by receiving countenance and protection and endowment from the State, ...	I.	19—24
———— Ditto, ...	IV.	21, 22
———— the Lawfulness of her uniting with the State considered and proved:—	I.	
Because consisting of the same persons as the State, ...	—	28, 29
Because Christ, as her Head, and as also King of nations, must be obeyed, ...	—	30—32
Because it is a consequence of the supremacy which religion ought to exercise over all who profess it, ...	—	33, 34

	LECTURE.	PAGE.
Church, Lawfulness of uniting with the State,		
Because the Jewish Establishment is an example of such union, ...	I.	35—37
Because the light of nature and the prac- tice of all nations confirms the dictate of Scripture, ...	I.	38—42 and 68, 69
——— the danger both to her spiritual and civil interests, from her not being allied to the Sate, ...	Pref. Disc. and I.	23—36 55—58
——— may be established though there be no Endowment, ...	I.	6
——— Lawfulness of her accepting an Endow- ment from the State, ...	II.	
1. Objection to this from John iv. 26, answered, ...	—	5—16
2. Ditto from 1 Cor. ix. 7—14, ditto, —	—	22—29
——— her Right to receive support from the public funds, ...	III.	
——— no pecuniary burden to the community, —	III.	34, 35
——— her Duty to accept a national endowment, —	IV.	25, 26
——— the Advantages to, from alliance with State,—	V.	
In the State's interference in preventing notorious blasphemy, ...	—	15, 16
In securing respect for God's worship, —	—	21—25
Ditto for the Sabbath, —	—	35—44
——— the Advantage of union with the State in Extending her Means and Resources, —	VI.	
——— at one time independent of these means, —	—	5—7
——— the advantage of the protection of the State to, in the fourth century, ...	—	8—11
——— patronised previous to time of Constan- tine, ...	—	7—12
——— corrupted before that time, ...	VII.	33—39

	LECTURE.	PAGE.
Church,— corrupted in time of St. Cyprian,	VI.	12 14
——— corrupted in time of Origen,	—	15
——— became more corrupt afterwards,	—	9
——— causes of corruption in, in first three Centuries,	{ — VII.	15 and 35—43
——— corruptions in, no argument against union with State.	{ Pref. Disc. VI.	16—20 16, 17
——— Admission of improper members into, no necessary consequence of alliance with the State,	Pref. Disc.	21
——— in what not exempted from the control of Civil Government,	Pref. Disc.	26—33
——— cause of her inefficiency,—want of means	—	27—29
——— delivered the country from Popery,	—	28, 30
——— advantage of Union with State, in se- curing independence to her Ministers. <i>Vide</i> MINISTERS,	VII.	
——— an Established, is favourable to the purity of Dissenting Churches,	VII.	23—29
——— Property, nature of,	{ I. IX.	59 and 5—8
——— state of, in Scotland,	IX.	10—20
——— originally a donation,	Pref. Disc.	65—67
——— Magistrate may regulate and protect	—	61
——— necessity of maintaining it in- volute,	III.	36—38
——— Payment of, may be compelled as a just debt at common law,	Pref. Disc.	67—68
——— the Union between, and the State in Scotland,	IX.	3
——— of SCOTLAND, how far it is indebted to State for support,	—	4—8

	LECTURE.	PAGE.
Church of Scotland, how far burdensome to the public, ...	IX.	9—22
————— how far she has preserved her just rights, ...	—	29
————— struggles maintained for these with the State in different periods of her history, ...	—	30—41
————— Parochial Economy of, fitted for the ends of a union between Church and State, ...	X.	
————— what her Parochial Economy is, ...	X.	6—15
————— that Economy not contrary to word of God, ...	X. and XI.	15 5—11
————— its beneficial effects upon the people, as exhibited in different periods of her history, ...	X.	17—38
————— accommodation in, ...	—	41—45
————— never a Voluntary Church, ...	—	52—54
————— no want of expansion in, ...	—	54—59
————— a Missionary Church when in her greatest vigour, ...	—	60—63
————— advantage of, to Scotland, ...	—	65—67
————— Causes of departure from the Parochial Economy of, ...	XI.	
1. Increased population, ...	—	12—15
2. High seat rents, ...	—	24—34
3. People going after new ministers, ...	—	34—36
4. Retaining large towns in one parish, ...	—	36—38
————— Means of promoting return to Parochial Economy of, ...	XI. and XII.	36—43 4—20
————— in what respects the Church of the <i>Poor</i> , ...	—	3—19
1. Because she ministers to their temporal necessities, ...	—	20—22

	LECTURE.	PAGE.
Church of Scotland, the Church of the Poor, &c., (Continued.)		
2. Because she educates them, . . .	XII.	22—25
3. ——— she contends for a Sabbath to them, . . .	—	25—30
4. ——— she asserts their right to religious instruction and Chris- tian privilege, . . .	Pref. Disc. 22 and XII.	28—30
——— the Church of the <i>People</i> , . . .	—	31—44
1. By her popular constitution, . . .	—	31—34
2. By what she has done for the peo- ple, . . .	—	34—41
In asserting their civil liberties, . . .	—	34—36
In contending for their religious privileges, . . .	—	36—41
3. By what the people have done for her, . . .	—	41—46
In Reforming the Church, . . .	—	42
In fighting for and establishing her, . . .	—	43
In praying for her, . . .	—	44—46
Compulsion, not involved in the idea of union { betwixt Church and State, . . . }	I.	26—28 61—65
Conscience, Magistrate may not force, . . .	Pref. Disc.	50—51
——— what are its rights, . . .	—	54—57
——— interference with its rights not neces- sarily involved in the idea of a Union, . . .	I.	24—25
——— of Dissenters of Scotland not violated by being taxed for Establishments, . . .	III.	21—23
——— not necessarily violated by payment of taxes for an object of which it does not ap- prove, . . .	—	27—34
Constantine established, but did not endow the Church, . . .	I.	7
——— what he did for the Church, . . .	VI.	8—10

	LECTURE.	PAGE.
Constantine, corruptions in the Church did not <i>commence</i> in his reign, ...	VII.	35—39
Controversy, the nature and necessity of, ...	{ Pref. Disc. 3, 4 VIII.	20—28
———— the spirit in which to be maintained, Pref. Disc.	4	
———— improvement to be made of the present	XI.	43—47
Crime prevented by Established Church, ...	VIII.	44—55
———— sum expended upon, ...	—	47, 48
———— number of persons committed for, in 1818, —		53
Cyprian, St. corruptions in the Church in his day, ...	VI.	12—13
 DISSENT, its inefficiency, ...	VI.	31
———— what done for the Poor, ...	X.	39—43
———— what done for Highlands, ...	VI.	48
———— its purity favoured by its vicinity to an Establishment, ...	VII.	23—24
———— this shewn in the change of opinion by the Secession at the French Revolution, and —		25—29
———— in the state of the Popish Priesthood in Ireland, ...	—	30—33
Dissenters in England, state of, in last century, ...	X.	55—58
———— who hold property, payment of which is withheld, resort to compulsion, ...	Pref. Disc.	69
———— Scottish Board of, their statistics exposed, ...	X.	43—45
 EDUCATION, what the Church of Scotland has done for, ...	XII.	22—25
Endowments not necessary for the argument in favour of Civil Establishments, ...	I.	6—7
———— to argue for, not prohibited by Scrip- ture, ...	II.	4—5
———— no tendency to make Clergy indolent, ...	VII.	17
———— no tendency to foster servility, —		18—20
———— necessity of, to the Parochial System, ...	XII.	12—16
———— not to enrich the Clergy, ...	—	16—18

	LECTURE.	PAGE.
Establishments, nature of the argument in favour of, ...	I.	4—6
_____ the argument for, not dependent of any particular Establishment, {	Pref. Disc. 16—20 I. 6, 7 & VIII. 32, 33	
_____ admitted to be lawful by the Associate Synod, ...	Pref. Disc. 23	
_____ argument for the expediency of, {	VI. 20—26 & VIII. 15—43	
_____ advantage of, to State in securing for it public Prayers by Rulers, ...	VIII. 17, 18, 19	
_____ do, in promoting the diffusion of religious knowledge, ...	_____ 20—43	
_____ corruptions of, do not flow necessarily from union in the State, ...	Pref. Disc. 16—20	
_____ Ditto, no evidence of the tendency to promote infidelity and irreligion, ...	VIII. 20—32	
_____ advantage of, as mean of promoting pure religion, ...	_____ 32—43	
_____ the allegation that they tend to produce division refuted, ...	_____ 60—64	
Education, advantage of, in preventing crime and pauperism, ...	_____ 44—58	
FRANCE endows all sects, ...	Pref. Disc. 36	
GALLIENUS, recognised the Church as a corporate body, ...	VI. 7	
Grievance, a Religious Establishment not one	VIII. 61	
HIGHLANDS, an illustration of the inefficacy of Voluntary principle, ...	_____ 47—52	
_____ benefits of Parochial system to, ...	X. 34—37	
IRELAND, domination of Irish Priesthood, in	_____ 30	

LECTURES, the object and utility of a course of, I. 2—4

MAGISTRATE, CIVIL,—His duty to do what he can, and may lawfully do, for promoting religion, ...

Pref. Disc. 36—38

This duty enjoined—

From the obligation on every man to serve God in his peculiar station, {

— 38—40

I. 45
VIII. 6, 7

From scriptural precept and example, ...

{ Pref. Disc. 41, 42
and VIII. 7, 8

From the obligation to protect the Government from dissolution, to use every means for the good of the community, ...

{ Pref. Disc. 43—50
I. 46—48
VIII. 5

————— what he can and may lawfully do, as authorised by scriptural examples, {

Pref. Disc. 52—54
VIII. 7—12

————— the extent of his ability, { and the means he may employ for the end, {

— 55—60
I. 50—54

————— does not by so doing necessarily injure religion, ...

— 46—49

————— may call together and confer with the Ministers, ...

Pref. Disc. 60

————— in what respects his power controuls that of the Church

— 26—32

————— where he has recognised God's word as his rule, and favoured the Church, has promoted its ends, ...

— 34

————— cannot exercise jurisdiction in Ecclesiastical matters, ...

{ I. 69, 70
Pref. Disc. 60

————— his presence in General Assembly no interference, ...

{ V. 17
IX. 41

————— has right to prevent *notorious* blasphemy, ...

V. 7—10

————— does this not on civil but on religious grounds, ...

— 11—14

	LECTURE.	PAGE.
Magistrate, Civil, may countenance and sanction		
truth of God's word, ...	Pref. Disc.	59
———— his interference to prevent		
blasphemy, advantageous to the Church, ...	V.	15, 16
———— may interfere to secure re-	{ Pref. Disc.	60
spect to the worship of God, ...		
———— his interference a religious in-	V.	17, 18
terference, ...	—	18—21
———— the advantage of this inter-		
ference, shewn by a reference to South Sea		
Islands and early times of the Church, ...	—	22—24
———— can secure to his subjects the		
Sabbath as a day of rest by the power of pub-		
lic Police, ...	—	25—28
———— does this on religious grounds, ...	—	32—34
———— the advantage of this to the		
Church, ...	—	35—44
———— Ditto to the State, ...	VIII.	17
Ministers, inexpediency of their being dependent		
on their flock for support shewn, ...	Pref. Disc.	71
1. From the conduct of Paul, ...	{ Pref. Disc.	72
2. — - the likelihood of avarice intro-		
ducing error, ...	and	
3. — - the effects which arise from the	II,	27—29
depravity of the People, ...	Pref. Disc.	73—75
4. — - the nature of the <i>Missionary</i>		
part of their functions, ...	—	79
———— the precise method of providing for, not		
specified by Dissenters, ...	—	83—86
———— of the Establishment bring the lessons		
of Religion to the Poor, ...	VI.	26
———— necessity of efficient, to the constitution		
of a well conditioned Church. . . .	VII.	4, 5

	LECTURE.	PAGE.
Ministers,		
——— how they should be supported,	VII.	6
——— Advantages of, being Endowed,	—	
1. Because less apt to be suspected of sordid motives,	VII.	7
2. ——— not likely to be so anxious as to worldly condition,	—	8
3. ——— less exposed to loss of character from popular tyranny,	—	9—10
4. ——— less ready to accommodate his ministrations to the prejudices of his flock,	—	10—12
5. Or stoop to artifice to maintain his ascendancy over his flock,	—	12—14
6. Or lord it over men's conscience,	—	15—16
Miracles rendered the Church independent of national support,	VI.	5
——— did not cease till end of third century,	—	6, 7
PARISHIONERS, the assertion that all are entitled to demand Church privileges denied,	Pref. Disc.	21
Parochial Economy of Scotland, Nature of,	{ X.	6—15
	{ XI.	5—11
——— not contrary to the Word of God,	X.	15, 16
——— Advantages of, in its practical working, exhibited in different periods of Church history,	X.	17—38
——— gives the right of Instruction to the Poor,	Pref. Disc.	22
——— Objections to considered,	—	
1. Because days of fasting being frequent at the Reformation,	—	49, 50

	LECTURE.	PAGE.
Parochial Economy, objections to, (<i>Continued.</i>)	X.	
2. Because, if <i>essential</i> to the nation, this would reflect on propagation of Christianity in primitive times,	—	50, 52
3. Because it was as a Voluntary Church, the Church of Scotland formerly suc- ceeded so well,	—	52—54
4. Because no principle of expansion in it,	—	54—58*
5. Because it cherishes a selfish spirit,	—	59—63
Causes of departure from,	XI.	
1. Encrease of population,	—	12—14
2. High seat rents,	—	24—34
3. Tendency of the people to go to new churches,	—	34—36
4. Retaining large towns under one pa- rish, with one session without a pro- per sub-division,	—	36—38
Means of promoting return	XI.	36—43
to,	XII.	
1. New subdivision of parishes,	—	4
2. Increase of places of worship,	—	7—12
3. Endowments,	—	12—20
Patriotism, the maintenance of an Establish- ment an object of the purest,	VIII.	58—60
Patronage, not peculiar to an Established Church,	IX.	26—28
Church of Scotland has not succeeded in preserving herself from the evils of,	—	23
an enemy to ditto,	XII.	39—41
Church may subsist without,	IX.	24—25
originated in Voluntary Churches,	Pref. Disc.	72
Exists in America	IX.	26—28
Paul's example, unfavourable to the Voluntary Principle, &c.	II.	27—29

	LECTURE.	PAGE.
Paul, corruptions existed in the Church in his day,	VI.	12
Pauperism prevented by Establishments,	VIII.	44—55
—— amount of sums expended upon, in Eng- land,	——	44
—— Ditto in Scotland,	——	44
—— Ditto collected for, by the Church,	XII.	20
People, the Church of Scotland <i>their</i> Church,	——	31—43
Persecution, none implied in taxing Dissenters for Establishments,	III.	19—35
—— none, in punishing open blasphemy,	V.	8—10
—— has followed where the Magistrate did not recognise the word of God, and opposed the Church,	Pref. Disc.	33, 34
Poor, Church of Scotland the Church of the	XII.	20
—— because she ministers to temporal necessities of,	——	21, 22
—— because she educates and secures a sabbath to,	——	25—28
—— because she gives them right to religious instruction,	XII.	28—31
	Pref. Disc.	22
Popery in Ireland, its effects on the Clergy,	VII.	30—33
Prayer, public, by Rulers and Legislators, con- trary to Voluntary principle,	VIII.	18—19
Property, nature of, the application of national,	Pref. Disc.	63—65
—— nature of, Church, in general,	I.	59
—— of Church of Scotland,— <i>Vide</i> CHURCH,	IX.	5—8
Prophecy, illustrations from, in support of Civil Establishments,	——	9
	VIII.	11, 12
Provision, national, for the Church,— answer to the objection of its injustice,	Pref. Disc.	62—65
RELIGION, no natural desire for, and unless brought within the reach of men will not be sought after,	VI.	20—26

	LECTURE.	PAGE.
Religion, expediency of Magistrate providing for promoting, ...	Pref. Disc.	44—47
—— fitted to promote the welfare of Society, ...	VIII.	35—54
SABBATH, its <i>religious</i> observance not an object for the interference of the State, ...	V.	25, 26—28
—— as a day of Rest, is a subject of Legislative enactment, ...	——	25
—— such enactments vindicated from the charge of partiality and oppression to the Poor, ...	——	28—32
—— secured to the poor by the Church of Scotland, ...	XII.	25—27
Scriptural objections to Establishments considered, ...		
—— the objection from John xviii. 36, ...	II.	5—16
—— the objection from 1 Cor. ix. 7—14, ...	——	22—29
—— the example of the Jewish Polity, ...	IV.	17
—— Ditto of Abraham, Jehosophat, Uzziah, ...	VIII.	7, 8
—— Ditto of Heathen Rulers, ...	IV.	18
—— the objection that this was typical, ...	VIII.	9
—— the declarations of Prophecy, ...	IV.	19
—— the absence of a prohibition against supporting the Church in the New Test.	IV.	20
Spirituality, the objection to Establishments on this head exposed, ...	I.	8—10
—— the opinions of those who argue from this against all secular support exposed, ...	II.	16—22
State, meaning of the term, ...	{ Pref. Disc. 6 and I.	11—14
—— its powers and ends, ...	{ ——— 15 IV.	4—6
—— ends common to it with the Church, ...	Pref. Disc.	10—12

	LECTURE.	PAGE.
State, <i>means</i> common to it with the Church,	Pref. Disc.	12—13
—— in what it differs from the Church,	——	8, 9
—— in what independent of the Church,	——	10
—— nothing <i>necessarily</i> inconsistent with,		
in union with the Church, ...	I.	24, 25
—— no right to dictate to its subjects Modes		
of Faith, ...	——	44—60
—— Right of, to expend Public Funds in sup-		
port of the Church, ...	III.	6
—— because she will thereby promote the Na-		
tional well-being, ...	III.	7—12
—— Objections to this considered,		
1. From the idea of compulsion,	——	12, 13
2. And from the State's inability to decide		
as to the true religion, ...	——	13—19
—— is to use its power both for the temporal		
and spiritual interest of the community,	——	17—16
—— Duty of, to Endow the Church, ...	IV.	
1. For the sake of the Church,	——	5—12
2. For its own sake, ...	——	12—14
Its duty to protect its members, and		
prevent violation of the Sabbath,	V.	25
To what extent it can do this, ...	——	26—34
—— not to touch the peculiar rights of the {		22, 23
Church, ...	{ V.	17
—— the nature of the aid it can give the {		14—16
Church, ...	{ IV. & V.	17
—— Advantages to, from the Civil Establish-		
ment of the true religion, ...	VIII.	
1. Because what is right must be poli-		
tic.	——	15—17
2. ——— Civil Establishments afford		
the means of sanctifying its pro-		
cedure, ...	——	17—20

State,—Advantages to from Civil Establishments
of Religion, (*Continued.*)

3. Because they tend to promote the
most important interests, through
the diffusion of religious know-
ledge, ... VIII. 20—43

4. ——— the prevalence of religion
tends to prevent the encrease of
pauperism and crime, ... ——— 44—55

- union between, and the Church as it exists
in Scotland, ... IX. 3

TAXES, for the Established Church no *peculiar*

- hardship, ... III. 21—24

- duty on subjects to pay those imposed for
support of the Church, ... ——— 19—21

- not unjust to be demanded from United
Seceders, ... ——— 21—23

- not approving of, no reason for not paying, ——— 24—27

- religious, nothing of a *peculiar* hardship in, ——— 28—33

- Tithes, history of, in Scotland, ... IX. 9—20

- VOLUNTARY CHURCH, originated Patronage, ——— 25

- continued it, ... ——— 26

- Church of Scotland never a
Voluntary Church, ... X. 53

- Voluntary Principle, a change to this might lead
to the ascendancy of Popery, ... Pref. Disc. 86

- would not furnish the requi-
site provision for moral and religious instruct-
tion to the people, ... VI. 20—26

- how it has worked in America, ——— 32—47

- inefficacy of, illustrated, from
Highlands of Scotland, ... ——— 47—52

	LECTURE.	PAGE.
Voluntary Principle, the evils which it fosters in		
Ministers, ...	VII.	18
causes which may mitigate		
these ends, ...	—	21
tends to foster domination and		
subserviency, ...	—	30—33
its effects in the first three		
centuries, ...	—	34—43
what it has done, for large {	VIII.	31, 32
towns, and for the Poor in Scotland; also {	X.	39—47
in Ireland and London, ...	—	47, 48

AUTHORS REFERRED TO.

- Acts of Assembly, Lect. X. 22.
Allison's History of France, Pref. Disc. 45.
Baillie's Dissuasive, Pref. Disc. 23, 34, 49, 85.
Barrow's Discovery, Pref. Disc. 49.
Binney, VII. 9.
Bogue and Bennet, X. 57.
Brown, Mr C., Church Establishments Defended, Pref. Disc. 42,
Lect. I. 25.—V. 34.
——— Dr of Haddington, Pref. Disc. 42.
——— Dr of Langtoun, X. 25.
——— Dr John, VIII. 31.—XI. 41.—XII. 8.
Buchanan, Rev. Rob. of Glasgow, XII. 25.
Burns, Dr of Tweedsmuir, Pref. Disc. 36.
Burroughe's Irenecum, Pref. Disc. 86.
Burnet, Bishop, X. 26.
Calamy, X. 55.
Calderwood, X. 20.
Campbell on Ecclesiastical History, VII. 36.
Chalmers, Dr, X. 31, 37.—XI. 3, 21, 23.
Clarendon's Religion and Polity, Pref. Disc. 26.
Cleland, Dr, X. 42.
Coleridge's Constitution of Church and State, Pref. Disc. 33. 64.
Colton, Church and State in America, I. 40.
Cotton's Way of the Church in New England, Pref. Disc. 86.
Confession of Faith, Pref. Disc. 26.
Combe's Lectures on Education, II. 25.
Croly, Pref. Disc. 33, 75, 79, and VII. 30.
Defoe, VIII. 31.—X. 28, 31.
Discipline, First Book of, IX. 13.—X. 6, 11.—XI. 21.
Do., Second Book, X. 6.
Doddridge, X. 55.

- Douglas of Cavers, Pref. Disc. 74.
 Dunlop's Defence of Confessions, Pref. Disc. 16.
 Dwight, VI. 35, 40.
 Ecclectic Review, VII. 14.—X. 55, 56.
 Edinburgh Encyclopedia, X. 41.
 Eusebius, VI. 12, 14.
 Fletcher, X. 29.
 Flint, VI. 39, 42, 46.
 Gibbon, VI. 8.
 Gibson on the Real Origin of Romish and Priestly Domination,
 VI. 1, 7.—VII. 12, 35.—Pref. Disc. 32.
 ———, Poor Man's Enemies Exposed, X. 45.
 Gillies's Historical Recollections, X. 38.
 Guerey's Moral Statistics of France, VIII. 49.
 Hall, Rev. Robert, III. 11.—VIII. 21, 35, 36.
 Hallam's Middle Ages, VII. 38, 39.
 Heugh, V. 2.—VIII. 21, 60.
 Johnson, Dr, VIII. 49.
 Kemp, Dr, X. 35.
 Kirkton, X. 24.—XII. 10.
 Lee, Dr, X. 34.
 Lightfoot's Battle with a Wasp's Nest, Pref. Disc. 23.
 ——— Harmony, VIII. 60.
 Lorimer, Pref. Disc. 35, 42.—I. 40.—VI. 33.
 M'Crie, Evidence on Patronage, IX. 22.—X. 25.—Life of Melville,
 X. 26.
 M'Donnell on Roman Catholic Oath, Pref. Disc. 35.
 Marshall, Pref. Disc. 37, 43, 50.—VIII. 21.
 Mill's and Smith's Missionary Tour in America, VI. 36.
 Miller on the Duties of Ruling Elders, IX. 26.
 Milton, V. 2.
 Montesquieu, VIII. 34.
 Mosheim, Pref. Disc. 34.
 Neal's Puritans, Pref. Disc. 35.
 Neander's History of the Church, VI. 7, 33, 47.
 Newton, John, IV. 12.

Oberlin, XI. 42.

Origen, VI. 15.

Orthodox Presbyterian, X. 58.

Orton, Job, Letters, X. 55, 56.

Payson, VI. 40.

Peddie, Dr, Letter to Porteous, Pref. Disc. 23, 30, 60.

Presbyterian Magazine, I. 25.

Report of Patronage Committee, IX. 22.—X. 25.

Russell's History of the Church in Scotland, Pref. Disc. 27, 29.

Taylor, Rev. M. of Perth, VII. 27.

Vattel's Law of Nations, IV. 4, 5, 6.

Waddington's Church History, VII. 41.

Warburton's Alliance and Divine Legation, Pref. Disc. 45, 46.

Wardlaw, Pref. Disc. 48.—V. 2.—VIII. 22.

West Elizabeth, Memoirs of, XII. 46.

Williams, Dr, VIII. 12.

Willis, Pref. Disc. 43, 60.—V. 34.

PREFATORY DISCOURSE.

MANY sincere Christians dislike controversy, and, so far from engaging in it themselves, can scarcely allow that others should. An enlarged view of the history of the Christian Church might serve to convince such persons, that all along, it has been like a beleagured city, sometimes in danger from the assaults of its enemies without, still more frequently, perhaps, from carelessness or treachery within ; and that at no era has the truth been more gloriously displayed, or achieved nobler triumphs, than when its dangers have called forth a vigorous and manly defence. From the militant state of the Church as a public witness-bearer for God and his truth, in a world which revolts from both, the continuance of controversy might have been expected ; but that it is appointed, and that too within the visible Church itself, for wise reasons, we have the highest authority for believing : “ There must be heresies or divisions among you, that they who are approved may be made manifest.”

That error, when it does appear, should be met by a bold re-exhibition of the truth, seems to be one of the first duties which the Church owes to her Divine Head; a duty which she owes not more to her own preservation than to the interests of her enemies. It is, strictly speaking, a duty of Love, as every Christian duty is; Love to her Master, Love to his disciples, and Love to mankind at large. The true ground of offence in this matter, is an evident want of love, or any symptom of ill-will towards the persons who have fallen into error; for, although the Apostle commands us to "*contend earnestly for the faith,*" and to "*rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;*" the very rebukes of a Christian should proceed from, and consist with, a spirit of comprehensive charity. If undertaken in this spirit, controversy, so far from being a proof of malevolence towards our enemies, is itself an evidence at once of our love for them, and of our attachment to the gospel of Christ.

The present controversy is one, which, above all others, should be conducted in this spirit; for, it is waged, partly at least, with persons professing the same faith with ourselves, and it relates to the best means, not of extending the views of this or that party, but of maintaining and promoting in the world the ascendancy of that kingdom, which consists "*in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*" That it has been permitted to arise at this time in the Christian Church, should be sufficient to convince every careful student of providence, that some wise

and good ends are to be served by it; and it becomes us to rest in the assurance, that, distressing as some of its concomitant evils may be, it will ultimately subserve the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom. Were I to give my own reading of this providence, I should say, that the present controversy is the natural fruit, and, at the same time, the retributive result of that lamentable negligence which has left the Church, with many corruptions which a faithful discipline might have removed, to watch over a people who have vastly outgrown the means provided for their pastoral superintendence; and that it may be designed to stir up the Church to greater vigour in the work of self-reformation, and, at the same time, to impress on general society, by bringing more prominently into view, the great principle, that every man in his station, whether ruler or subject, is bound to employ all his talents and means for the promotion of the Redeemer's cause,—a principle that had been well-nigh superseded by a false liberality, which, instead of dictating *kindness*, as the gospel does, to the *persons* of all men, whatever their opinions or characters might be, was rapidly inoculating the public mind of this country with an indifference, consistent only with infidelity, as to what religious *opinions* were entertained by any party, or whether they entertained any religious opinions at all.

Having been requested by the gentlemen who originated and superintended the following Course of Lectures, to write a Prefatory Discourse to the

volume in which they are now, for the first time presented to the public, it has occurred to me, that I might best fulfil their wishes by offering a **GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE CASE**, exhibiting some of the more important of those first or fundamental principles on which the cause of Establishments depends. These may be stated in a short series of propositions, abstaining as much as possible from detail on those topics which have already been so ably discussed, and where some of them must be noticed, passing them over more lightly, and dwelling at greater length on others which have received a less full investigation.

It being premised that by the Church, we mean, an organised society of professing Christians, of whatever scriptural name,—and by the State or Civil Magistrate, the ordinance of Civil Government, in general, whether more or less monarchical or democratic, I observe,

I. Public bodies, essentially different, and rightfully independent of each other, may have certain common ends, and act harmoniously together, towards the accomplishment of these ends, without any encroachment being made by either on the peculiar prerogatives of the other.

We know not, that, in this general form, the proposition will be denied. Several examples might be given, were it needful, to illustrate its truth. A medical board of health, a scientific body, or a college, may be said to differ essentially from Civil Government, and to be independent of it, inasmuch as no magistrate

can, without tyranny, prescribe the doctrines which are to be believed and taught, or the means which are to be applied by them respectively. At the same time, it is equally true, that the ends which they severally seek to promote, are common to them with the Civil Government, to which nothing that concerns either the being or the well-being of society is alien ; and as, in seeking to accomplish these ends, the Government may give its influence and lend its aid, without infringing on the independence of the learned bodies whom it patronises ; so these bodies may receive that aid, and render their services in return, without invading in any shape the prerogatives of the civil power.

There is nothing, then, in the alliance of two public bodies, however different, provided they have some ends in common, which *necessarily* interferes with the independence of either,—such alliance, as, in the cases specified, may be productive of good to both, by promoting the ends which each has in view ; and if, in any case, evil should result from such connection, it must be ascribed, not to the mere *fact*, but to the *faulty terms* of the alliance.

II. The Church and the Civil Government are essentially different, and rightfully independent the one of the other ; but they have some ends in common, and it is possible that an alliance may be formed betwixt the two, such as will enable them to co-act harmoniously towards the accomplishment of these ends,

while each retains its own peculiar prerogatives and privileges.

That the Church and the Civil Government are essentially different from one another, is admitted on all hands, and any attempt to confound the one with the other, would be contrary alike to reason and Scripture. Some of the more prominent points of difference may, however, be specified, as one of the best results of this controversy may be the correction of abuses in the Church itself, by the diffusion of right views respecting its constitution and character. They *differ* then in their origin—the Civil Governor holding primarily of God, as the universal sovereign; the Church holding of Christ as mediator; and this difference is of some importance, notwithstanding the great truth which is clearly affirmed in Scripture, viz., that *both* are now placed under Christ, who is not only “the Head of the Church,” but “Head over *all things* to the Church.” They *differ* in their extent; Civil Government being an ordinance of God in all nations, the Church being limited to those countries where the gospel is preached. They *differ* in respect to some of their *ends*; certain secular purposes being served by the State, which are not directly contemplated by the Church as a spiritual body, however much she may be fitted to aid in their attainment; and certain spiritual purposes, again, being served by the Church, which the State, considered as such, cannot effect. They *differ* in respect to some of the means by which these ends are to

be promoted ; the Civil Magistrate having the power of the sword, which is withheld from the Church, and the prerogative of making war on just and needful occasions, which is not competent to a spiritual kingdom ; while the Church again has warrant to use the sword of ecclesiastical discipline with which the Magistrate may not interfere. They *differ* in respect to their *officers*, the Civil Magistrate having no power, as such, to preach or to administer the sacraments of religion ; and the officers of the Church, as such, having no power to exercise any function of the Magistracy ; so that, even were there a nation in which every subject of the State was also a member of the Church, that nation would still be governed by two distinct sets of office-bearers, the one belonging to the Church, the other to the Commonwealth.

In these, and, perhaps, in some other respects, the Church and the Civil Government differ from one another ; but they are not only different ; each is, in its own proper sphere, and in reference to its peculiar objects, Independent of the other.

We do not mean to affirm, either, that a man holding the office of the magistracy is exempt from the authority of the Church, or, that a man holding the office of an ecclesiastic, is exempt from the authority of the State ; far less that private persons are released from subjection to the one by reason of their subjection to the other ; but that the two jurisdictions are distinct and independent, so that neither does the State derive its authority from the Church, nor does

the Church derive its authority from the State. Both are divine institutions, and they have, as “twin-children,” of the same Father, a separate existence, an independent will, and a co-ordinate authority. This important doctrine stands opposed to two errors equally flagrant and pernicious; the one Erastian, which derives the authority of the Church from the will of kings and princes,—the other Popish, which makes the State the mere creature and tool of the Church. The rightful authority of Civil Government is derived directly from God, as the moral governor of the world, and is equally valid in heathen as in Christian countries. The legitimate authority of the Church is derived from its Divine Founder, and is equally valid under whatever form of civil polity it may be exercised. The Church, as such, has no right to interfere with the jurisdiction, or usurp the functions, or supplant the officers, of the Commonwealth; and, in like manner, the Civil Government has no right to encroach upon the spiritual functions, prerogatives, or powers of the Church. The one is fenced round with the same divine sanctions as the other, and each will best subserve the ends of its appointment, by allowing the other to retain what rightfully belongs to it.

But while each is, in respect to its proper and peculiar prerogatives, independent of the other, the two have *some ends in common*; and as some of their ends are common, so some of their means may be the same. The question, whether the Civil Magistrate, as such, is bound, in a Christian country, to promote, by all

means competent to him in that capacity, the glory of God and the salvation of his subjects, will fall to be considered hereafter ; it will suffice, for our present purpose, to shew, that some ends, in respect to which there can be no dispute, are common to the civil and to the ecclesiastical institute. Now, one end of Civil Government is to secure the peace and good order of society ; but this end is equally contemplated by the Church, whose commission bears that she is to teach men “ to lead a quiet and a peaceable life.” Another end of Civil Government is to secure the observance of justice betwixt man and man ; but this end also is contemplated by the Church, whose commission bears that she is to teach men “ to live in all godliness and in all honesty.” Another end of Civil Government is to promote the cause of humanity, to aid the progress of civilization, and to give facilities for the diffusion of knowledge ; but this end is also contemplated by the Church, which is called “ the kingdom of light,” in opposition to the kingdom of darkness, and which is God’s own educational institute, for the instruction of all classes of society. Whatever other and higher ends are contemplated by the Church, may be promoted *concurrently* with these inferior and subordinate ones ; and in so far, at least, as the latter are concerned, it cannot admit of a doubt, that there is such an inter-communion of interest betwixt the Church and the Civil Government of every nation, as may lay the ground-work for an amicable alliance and harmonious co-operation betwixt the two.

As some of their ends are common, so some of their means must be substantially the same. Thus, in reference to the ends above-specified, if it be admitted that the Civil Government may use those means which are most effectual for these ends, or that it is competent to her to use any other means than those which are strictly coercive or penal ; and if it be further admitted, that religious instruction supplies the most powerful motives to obedience, the best safeguard of public morals, the surest guarantee of civil justice, and the *primæ* stimulus to progressive civilization, then, to deny to the Civil Magistrate the use of those means of which the Church is possessed, were virtually to deprive him of the power to protect the stability of his *own government*, or to reach some of the highest ends for which that government was designed.

It is evident that the Magistrate cannot *personally* bring the means of religious instruction to bear upon the minds of society ; he cannot assume the office of a religious instructor, but must employ those who are commissioned by the Head of the Church for that office and work. But in using the means which the Church supplies, the Civil Government must not trench on the independence of the Church, or seek to convert it into a political engine. Should such an attempt be made, it must inflict a serious injury, both on the Church and the Commonwealth ;—on the Church, since, by such means, she will be deprived of her rightful authority, an authority derived from her Divine Head, essential to her preservation and purity,

and far more powerful for every purpose of national usefulness, than any sanction which she can receive from human governments;—and on the Commonwealth, since by such means the legitimate ends of good government, which will assuredly be best promoted by the free and unfettered exercise of the spiritual power, might be thwarted, or supplanted by other and less worthy designs, through the instrumentality of a priesthood which have lost their independence.

Now, the question is, is it possible to form an alliance betwixt these two societies, such as will enable them to act harmoniously together towards the national good, without subjecting either the one or the other to an abridgement of its independence—such as will leave entire the just prerogatives of each, and at the same time promote the common ends of both?

That *both are divine ordinances*, would seem to afford a presumption in favor of the affirmative; the possibility of an amicable alliance betwixt two institutions, each of which claims God for its author, and owns its subjection to him, being a supposition against which there is no *prima facie* objection, such as would arise were the ordinance of Civil Government regarded as of mere human origin, far more were it an invention of Satan, or were the Church, on the other hand, a system of imposture.

But this possibility will become apparent, if we can state specifically the terms on which such an alliance may be formed; and, in doing so, we mean not to refer to any particular Establishment, but to

exhibit the *beau ideal* of such an alliance, in the abstract.

Now, supposing that such an alliance is in contemplation, and that it is the simple desire of an enlightened Government to provide the means of sound religious instruction for all classes in the community, is it not conceivable that the Bible, and the Bible alone, might be recognised by both parties as the *ultimate* rule by which the duties, and privileges, and power of the Church should be determined? and that they might proceed on the principle of preserving *pure* and *entire* all the ordinances of Christ's kingdom, so as to secure its independence, and, at the same time, define and mark out, from the same authoritative rule, the limits of the ecclesiastical power, so as to prevent it from encroaching on the province of the civil? That such an arrangement is, in the nature of things, impossible, would be a bold averment; that there might be a difference of opinion respecting the precise terms of the compact, is freely admitted; but such difference is not *caused* by the proposed arrangement, being *anterior* to it, and arising from the different views which prevail respecting the scriptural form of polity, or the nature of the ministerial office, or the essence of gospel truth itself.

There are certain conditions on which the Church and the Civil Government have a right severally to insist, in forming such an alliance, if it is to be beneficial to either, or salutary to those for whom they have a common concern.

The Church may and ought to assert, (1) Her right to the *free preaching of the truth according to God's word*, without let or hindrance from the civil power, this being part of her commission and charter, with which the case of Peter shews that the civil magistrate may not lawfully interfere. (2.) The free administration of ordinances, according to the warrant of the same word, and on the terms, and after the manner therein prescribed. (3.) The free exercise of discipline ; the nature, the subjects, and the methods of such discipline being determined by the rule of Scripture, and, as involved in this, the sole right of judging in all ecclesiastical causes. (4.) The power of ordaining office-bearers, calling or designating them to particular charges, and upholding them in the free exercise of that authority which may be proved to belong to them by clear warrant of Scripture : and (6.) A suitable provision for the maintenance of certain office-bearers, such provision being enjoined by the Head of the Church.

If these rights are retained, the independence of the Church is preserved, and if they be ratified by law, then that independence is *secured* against the capricious interference of the Magistrate.

On the other hand, the Civil Government has an unquestionable right to secure its just prerogatives against the encroachments of the spiritual power, and with this view, as well as for other uses, has a right to expect an explicit statement of the doctrines which the Church will promulgate,—of the rule of discipline by

which she will abide,—of the nature and extent of the powers which she claims as a spiritual kingdom ; in other words, a Confession of Faith, as a standard to which, in the event of any threatened collision, an appeal may be made, as containing her own interpretation of the import of scripture on these points respectively. A Confession of Faith is, when properly considered, nothing more than an exhibition of what the Church holds to be the truth of God's word ; and such public avowal of her principles seems to be due, not only to the Civil Government, but to her own honour, and to the community at large.*

If an alliance were formed in this spirit, and on these or similar terms, would it, I ask, necessarily infer a forfeiture of independence on the part of the Church, or any undue encroachment on that of the State ? On the contrary, would it not give the additional *security of law*, and a public sanction to the unalienable privileges of the Church, and, at the same time, raise up a barrier of defence around the prerogatives of Civil Government against the powerful influence of the priesthood ?

It is of great importance that we should view the subject thus abstractedly, and without reference to the existing state of this or that particular Establishment. If it be said that we must take the *actual* as the only or the best proof of the possible in this matter, I answer, that the actual corruption of a Church, even

* *Vide* Professor Dunlop's able Defence of Confessions, 1710.

were it not only asserted but proved, is no argument against its possible purity; and that the abuses which are found in it may afford strong reason for its *reformation*, but none for its *overthrow*. Could it be shewn, indeed, that these corruptions flow necessarily out of its connection with the State, and that they cannot be removed so long as that connection subsists, then there might be some reason to conclude that a wholesome alliance betwixt the two is impracticable; but its corruptions, however numerous and however great, can afford no argument at all on this subject, unless they can be clearly traced to the principle of a State alliance, and shewn to be its necessary and inevitable results. It is incumbent on the enemies of the Establishment to prove this necessary connection by close logical deduction. It is not enough that they point to the corruptions which, as they think, cleave to the Churches established by law, as if the mere existence of such corruptions were enough to settle the question. We desiderate the proof that these corruptions are either peculiar to the Established Church, or that, if they be, they flow naturally and necessarily out of its connection with the Civil Government. Should it be asserted that the SYSTEM must be wrong if any abuses exist under it, I ask, how would this view apply to the seven churches in Asia,—did their declension prove the inherent vice of that *system* under which the primitive Churches were placed? or, to the Church of Corinth,—did its divisions prove the worthlessness of a system of Apostolic government?

or, to the Churches of Galatia,—did their self-righteous heresies prove the inefficiency of a system of apostolic instruction? or, to the Jewish Church, at the period of our Lord's advent,—did its corruptions prove the impolicy of a divine institution? or, to the Popish Church in Ireland at the present day,—will the monstrous heresies and iniquities of that Church be admitted, without some other collateral proof, as evidence of the constitutional spirit and tendency of the Voluntary system? If the absence of all corruption be essential to the being of a truly Christian Church, is there a society so called on earth which could stand this test, were it applied by an infidel? If there be, let it be named, owned, and acknowledged, as the living example of that perfection which our blessed Lord prescribes; but, if there be none such, let us not therefore regard the *beau ideal* of the Church as a phantom, but rather as—like the idea of individual perfection—an ennobling aim, a pure and lofty incentive to all practicable reformation. Let us beware lest, in charging the actual imperfections of Christian Churches by a hasty induction on their respective constitutions, we should subject ourselves to the necessity of acknowledging that the system which our Lord himself prescribed, whatever that may be, is not adapted to accomplish the purposes for which it was designed.

It is not denied that the constitution and the outward circumstances of the Church may affect her inward purity, but this is common to all Churches,

whether legally established or not; the point to be proved on the other side is, that the sanction of the Civil Government must necessarily have this effect. There may be corruption in the Church, for many causes are in operation to produce it, but this must not be attributed, in all cases, to the Magistrate;—there may be a dereliction of duty on the part of the Church's office-bearers, and a growing spiritual degeneracy on the part both of pastors and people, but this is no more than may be affirmed of many Churches which have had no connection with the State; witness the Churches of Asia and of Corinth even in apostolic times, and the melancholy degeneracy of many a once evangelical society at the present day. On the causes of such declension it were more easy to speculate than safe to decide, as I apprehend that such an enquiry must relate not merely to the operation of second causes, but to the reasons for the desertion of the Holy Spirit, and that a Church in this condition should be regarded by all with solemn awe, rather than pointed to by any party with the finger of triumph. At all events, we deceive ourselves, and we deceive our people, if we point to a mere legal enactment as the chief cause of such degeneracy; we must remember, for our own warning, and we must tell our people, for their's, that the source of the evil lies deeper, and nearer home; that the stagnant waters of every Church in which corruption festers, proceed from the troubled fountains of their own hearts; that it is not the well-meant protection of the Civil Magistrate, but the in-

sidious agency of Satan within her own borders, that troubles her; that, even were the tye snapt asunder by which the Government is connected with the Church, the same corruptions would arise; and that unless both pastors and people look more narrowly to the secret springs of the heart, and cry more earnestly for the grace of the Spirit, all outward changes will profit her nothing.

The abuses, then, which may creep in under any system are no argument against the system itself, unless it can be shewn that they are its proper and natural fruits; and, with reference to the present subject, it is proper to ask, even after the existence of an abuse has been proved, *first*, Whether it springs from the alliance, or from some collateral cause; and, *secondly*, Whether it springs from the mere *fact*, or from the *faulty terms* of the alliance,—terms which may be altered and amended, so as to prevent the recurrence of similar evils, and yet leave the alliance unbroken.

On a review of what has been written on the other side, I find two arguments which, although they have been too frequently adduced in connection with the *existing state* of particular Churches, may be regarded as having a bearing on the question as to the *possibility* of a pure connection betwixt the Christian Church and the Civil Government. The one arises out of the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, by which it is distinguished from secular governments; the other from the supposed necessary tendency of State-alliance to secularize the Church, by the ad-

mission, I presume, of ministers and members not duly qualified.

The former, which represents the Church as incapable of coalescing with Civil Government, is usually founded on our Lord's answer to Pilate,—“My kingdom is not of this world,” a declaration which we regard not as an interdict pronounced against the support of the Church by the State, but as a *security* given to the State against the encroachments of the Church; and which, moreover, must be in unison with the command to “kiss the Son, and to serve the Lord with fear,” which is addressed in the Psalm which refers to Pilate, “to the kings and princes of the earth.” * And, as to the second objection, drawn from the admission of improper ministers and members, is this, I ask, a necessary consequence of an alliance such as should leave to the Church her full power of call and collation, and at free liberty to exercise discipline according to the rule of God's Word? Is this evil peculiar to the Establishment? and if not, may it not arise within the Establishment, from the operation of the same causes which produce it in other denominations? †

* *Vide* Mr Bruce's Lecture, and a Sermon lately published on this text by the Author.

† Were it true, indeed, as has been often affirmed in this controversy, that, by right of civil law, every parishioner is entitled to Christian privileges, whatever may be his character, then the actual terms of the alliance were bad indeed; but,

“Is it possible to form a right alliance between the Church and the Civil Government, so as to preserve

although this is not relevant to the question at issue, seeing that we do not contend for such an Establishment, I may observe upon it that he must be ignorant as a child who can make this assertion, not knowing it to be false,—the full and free exercise of discipline being reserved by the Church as her unalienable prerogative, and exercised in innumerable cases; the only right which the parochial arrangement confers being that of every poor man to instruction, if he be ignorant, with a view of preparing him for the enjoyment of privileges. The parish minister is not at liberty to refuse privileges, as others may, through caprice, or indolence, or pride. If he refuse to baptise or to admit, on the ground of ignorance, he is bound to offer instruction—he dare not refuse to *teach*. But this is rather a privilege to the people than a proof of the Church’s corruption.—And, as to qualifications for Communion, she has the power of excluding all such as *she believes* to be debarred by her Divine Head. On this point, indeed, she may differ from other Churches, especially those of the Independents, who hold what has been called the doctrine of a pure Communion; but this she derives not from any reference to the authority of the State, but from a careful collation of Scripture, which speaks of Christ’s kingdom as a field containing tares and wheat; as a net including fishes good and bad; as a vine with some branches which are fruitless; she holds this as an article of her faith, which she could not renounce were all State support taken from her; she will not sit in judgment over the hearts of men; a credible profession is what she requires; and, in admitting, on that ground, she does not say: “I admit none but real spiritual Christians, born of God, I admit you,” but she warns them that mere knowledge, and mere morality, and mere profession, although

the integrity of each?" that is one question:—"Is the actual alliance in any given case such as is in all respects right and desirable?" is another, and totally different from the former; so different that if the first question be decided in the negative, the purest Established Church on earth affords no argument for the alliance,—if in the affirmative, the most corrupt Church affords no argument against it.*

III.—Without an amicable alliance, based on well-defined principles and ratified by law, there is the greatest possible danger, either of hostile collision be-

the only requisites with which man can deal, are not the only qualifications for meeting with God; that the faith, the love, and the hope which they profess, must be real and genuine, otherwise they cannot be acceptable worshippers; and that, while the door of ordinances is opened to them, they must examine *themselves*, and prove their own selves, before deciding whether it is their duty to enter into it.—For a masterly exposition of this subject see Principal Baillie's "Dissuasive," also Lightfoot's "Battle with a Wasp's Nest." I am sorry to find that the opposite views are gaining ground amongst our opponents.

* Dr Peddie (in 1800) says: "The Associate Synod will admit that Legal Establishments are lawful and warrantable; this, though you have often insinuated the contrary, they have never called in question; and, though there is no Established religion at present in the world which they can, in all points, approve, they will not refuse that some of them, and particularly the Establishment in Scotland, has been, in various respects, useful."—*Letter to Dr Porteous*, p. 60.

twixt the Church and the State, or of injurious encroachment on the one side or the other.

If it were certain that the Civil Magistrate, as such, has nothing to do with or concerning ecclesiastical matters, or that the Church, as such, has nothing to do with or concerning civil affairs, then, and then only, might it be plausibly affirmed that the two might co-exist in the same country, without an alliance, and yet without the risk of collision or encroachment. But if it can be shewn that there are matters which have a common relation to both jurisdictions, and in respect to which, although in different aspects, each claims a right to interfere, then "a kingdom within a kingdom" can hardly fail to produce conflict or confusion, unless there be a legally settled and well understood arrangement betwixt them.

It is right to maintain that there is an essential difference betwixt the Church and the Civil Government, and to view the one as in respect to its spiritual character, not only distinct from, but independent of the other; yet we must not forget that the *subjects* of both may be the same, and that *the same interests* which, in one view, are under the protection of the Civil power, are, in another, under the control of the Church or liable to be affected by it, and, *vice versa*, that the interests over which the Church is appointed especially to watch, are in a very great degree liable to be affected by the secular arrangements of the Civil power.

There are two classes of interests, which have a common relation to both jurisdictions: the one em-

braces certain *spiritual* interests properly belonging to the jurisdiction of the Church, in respect to which, however, the mere neutrality of the Civil Magistrate would inflict a serious injury on religion, such as the *weekly Sabbath*, and the Bible-law of marriage and divorce ; the other embraces certain *civil* rights and interests, naturally placed under the protection of Government, but with which the Church claims a right to interfere. Of the former I shall not speak, as they have been illustrated with great power in the following pages, contenting myself with indicating the place which they hold in the line of my present argument ; and requesting the reader to refer to the Lecture in which they occur.* But of the second class I may offer a short illustration.

That there are civil rights and interests which are liable to be affected by the Church, will appear from the following statement: The Church, according to the doctrine of those who are most inimical to its establishment, claims, notwithstanding its spiritual character, and that too on the ground of Divine right, the power of raising money for the support of its institutions and office-bearers ; it claims also, and on the ground of Divine right, the power of exercising discipline in public or private, a power which affects the reputation and character of all those in the community who belong, or seek to belong, to her ; it claims, further, and on the ground of Divine right, the power of carrying its censures into effect : and lastly, it claims the power

* Lecture by Rev. Mr Candlish.

of appointing men to speak or preach in public to all classes of people on subjects intimately connected with the morals and peace of society. Surely it is an important question, whether a spiritual kingdom, claiming such rights and exercising such a power over society, can be so entirely exempt from the control of the Civil power as the assertion that the Magistrate has nothing to do with or concerning the religion of his subjects would seem to intimate; and whether, if it must be so exempted, there will remain to the Magistrate, the power of protecting his own government, and regulating the civil interests which are properly under his care.

We affirm that the Body Ecclesiastic is no more than any private Christian separate from the kingdoms of the earth, or exempted from the control of Civil Government;* to insist on such separation, were to convert it into a monastic institution; to claim such exemption, were to withdraw it from under the control of the Magistrate, and leave it to rear within his kingdom a power which, unchecked, might soon endanger not only the civil prerogatives of rulers, but the civil liberties of their subjects too.† But consider separately the different interests which may be affected.

1. The Church, though not endowed by the State, claims a right inherent in itself, and derived from the authority of her Divine Head, to raise money by voluntary contributions for the support of religious or-

* Confession of Faith.

† Lord Clarendon's "Religion and Polity."

dinances. In the exercise of this right, she comes more on the ground of Civil jurisdiction than in the more spiritual part of her functions. And it is quite conceivable, nay, it has been shewn by experience, that she may thereby interfere very seriously with interests which are properly under the regulation of the Civil power. It is a fact, that in the exercise of this right, the Church had usurped to herself in Scotland, and in several other countries, the half of the whole heritable property or annual income of the nation;* and this not by legal assessment, but by fees, legacies, or gratuities, offered by superstition, and accepted by avarice. Is it, then, a fixed point, that the Civil power has no right to restrain this process, or to regulate it? If it be, the Civil Magistrate has lost the control over matters, which properly should, and which but for the Church, would actually fall under his jurisdiction; and the Church may under the colour of a Divine right, and that too by means of voluntary offerings alone, proceed onwards without effectual resistance, till she engross the whole property of the kingdom. But if it be said, the Church has no right beyond her charter, which demands only a decent maintenance; then I say, the appeal after all, is to the Word of God; the magistrate *has* to do with the Bible, were it only to restrain the usurpation of the Church! And the question of, who is to be judge? so frequently asked as a reason for the non-establishment of Religion, is equally applicable to this view of the subject.

* Dr Russel's History of the Church in Scotland.

2. It is competent for the Civil Magistrate to protect the character and reputation of his subjects. Here also the Church claims a jurisdiction, a power of inquiring into the life and conversation of her members ; of leading proof against them in cases of scandal, and of administering censure in private or in public. That this is competent to the Church, is clear from Scripture, and no earthly power may prevent the *scriptural* exercise of discipline. But does it follow, that because this is claimed and justly by the Church, the Civil Magistrate must leave the Church to exercise it according to its own pleasure, without reference to the charter on which her right is founded ? Is he at liberty, bound as he is to protect the character of his subjects from all unwarrantable imputations, to abandon it wholly to the caprice or malice of the priesthood ? Or does he not give the Church her full liberty when he seeks security that it shall be exercised according to the WORD OF GOD.

3. It is competent for the Civil Magistrate to protect the *liberty* and *lives* of his subjects. Here also the Church has claimed a power, with the view of giving effect to its censure, of confining men to prison, or inflicting upon them capital punishment ! That power is not asserted by any Protestant Church, but has been asserted and exercised in former times by those who held that the Church was superior to the Magistrate, and in these respects, beyond his controul. And if it be affirmed that he has nothing to do with religion, or that he is not competent to appeal to the Bible and act upon it ; then I see not any power on earth that

can keep the Church within the bonds of her commission, or prevent any invasion of the rights and liberties of men, if only, through superstition or ignorance, they become voluntarily subject to the spiritual power.*

4. It is competent for the Civil Magistrate to protect the government which he administers from dissolution, the law which he applies from insult, and the society over which he presides, from factious or revolutionary proceedings. If a Church, or any member of a Church, presuming on their independence as a section of Christ's spiritual kingdom, shall adopt anti-social or revolutionary tenets, and disseminate these in the public assemblies of the people; I say, the Civil Magistrate is not worthy of his station, as a Minister of God for

* It has been said that these severities could not have been practised but by the aid of the State.—(Adam Black.) But Llorente shews how strenuously the Inquisition was *opposed* by the magistracy in many instances; and in our own country, when the Regent, in answer to a communication from Cardinal Beaton, requesting him to proceed against George Wishart, declined to give a warrant for his trial and execution, and instructed Beaton not to take any step in the judicial inquiry, until he himself should arrive at St. Andrew's, telling him, that if he acted otherwise, "the man's blood would be required at his hand;" the haughty prelate returned for answer, *that he had not written, as though he depended in any degree upon his authority*, but only from a desire that the condemnation of the schismatic should proceed with some shew of public consent. As, however, this could not be obtained, he would now, *of his own accord*, follow such a line of conduct as might appear suitable. Accordingly, Wishart was EXECUTED by the authority of the Church.—Russel, i. 158.

good, if he do not set at nought all the spiritual pretensions of such a Church, opposed as they are to the Word of God, and vindicate the lawful authority of his government to interfere. And be it observed, Peter did not quarrel with the competency of the civil power, or refuse to plead when summoned to the bar ; neither did Paul, nor any of the apostles.

All this follows from the necessary subjection of the Church in civil matters to the government of the country in which it exists. Few will argue for the total exemption of the Church from the control of the civil power in these matters ; and as few will be disposed to concede to him the right of regulating them according to his mere pleasure ; there must be some recognised rule or standard, limiting and determining the rights of the Church on the one hand, and the control of the State on the other ; and that standard is ultimately the Word of God. This is the charter of the Church which the Civil Magistrate may not lawfully violate or set aside ; he is bound to conform his laws to its provisions. But how can this be effected, if either the Bible be a book to which as a Magistrate he is not at liberty to appeal, or if he be not competent to judge as to the agreement or disagreement of the Church's pretensions with her chartered privileges ?

It is vain to say these are civil matters, and in regulating them, the Magistrate does not interfere with religion, but only *circa sacra* ; * for the question recurs,

* Dr Peddie, in 1800, " In religion, I allow him, (the Magistrate,) no power ; in *matters of religion*, I allow him a little ; in what *respects* religion, or *regards* it, I allow him more ; and

according to what rule are they to be regulated? And, if this be answered, as it ought to be, "By the rule of God's Word," then the Civil Magistrate is bound to attend to that Word, and competent to judge of its meaning as his rule. But if, on the other hand, it be asserted that this is not the rule by which he is to be guided;†—that he must regulate his conduct towards the Church by his own views of political expediency, without reference to the charter of Christ's kingdom; then, if he interfere at all *circa sacra*, there is every reason to apprehend either a collision betwixt the two jurisdictions, or the encroachment of the one upon the other. The Civil power will either abridge the freedom of the Church, in respect of her provision or discipline, or preaching; or the Church will be left to adopt measures uncontrolled, which may be subversive of the civil rights and privileges of the nation.

But if, on the contrary, a well defined arrangement were made between the Church and the Commonwealth; if an alliance were formed on the basis of a

circa sacra, or about the externals of religion, I give him a great deal of power."—Dr Peddie, Letter, p. 70.

† The rule which some would lay down is, that the Magistrate should not in any way interfere with the actings of conscience; but an unlimited deference to conscience, however unenlightened or perverted, were a dangerous rule; for what enormities have been perpetrated in the name of conscience! Infant murder, human sacrifice, self exposure, or suicide, insurrection, tyrannicide! Would the British Government be justified in permitting a colony of Hindoos to settle in this country, and to practise *all* the rights of their religion?

fair interpretation of Scripture, and if such alliance were ratified by the Legislature, then, not only might hostile collision be avoided, but the Church would have the security of law in favor of her freedom and privileges, while the State would have a similar security against the encroachments of the spiritual power. The two objects of such an alliance are equally important; *first*, to protect the civil liberties of the country against the usurpations of the Church; and, *secondly*, to protect the spiritual privileges of the Church against the encroachments of the State.

It may be thought that in a country which has been leavened with a free Protestant spirit, danger, at least from the encroachments of an unendowed Church on its civil liberties, cannot be seriously apprehended. But in forming an opinion on the possibility of great national changes, we must take a large and comprehensive view of the history of the human race in times past, as affording the best index or rule of analogy for the future. It might have seemed impossible, at the time, that the poor Church of the apostolic age, should in the course of three centuries, acquire the wealth and the power which rendered it so formidable a rival to the Imperial Government, even before it was established by law; * and still more, that its influence should so increase, as to supplant the Imperial Government altogether, and to dispose of all the crowns and armies of Europe, not through the aid of powers de-

* Mr Gibson's pamphlet on the Church in the days of Constantine.

rived from the Civil Magistrate, but in spite of his opposition, or with his reluctant submission, * through the Voluntary blindness and superstition of the multitude. Nor are there wanting, in modern times, such evidences as may convince us, that a corrupt Church, although not established by law, may continue to oppress the liberties, and to prey on the prosperity of men, who, through ignorance and superstition voluntarily support it, and that too in the midst of European light and freedom. Witness the case of Ireland at the present day. †

I am aware that these reasonings might be set aside, were it possible to point to a case in which no alliance existed betwixt the Church and the Civil Government, and yet, no collision and no encroachment occurred. But the *facts* of history are coincident with the deductions of reason on this head. No instance of strict neutrality betwixt the two jurisdictions can be found in any country or in any age; for 1st, Where the Civil Magistrate has not recognised the Word of God

* Coleridge quotes a pregnant sentence from Spanzotti:—
“Ecclesia Catholica non, ma il Papismo denunciemo, perchè suggerito dal interesse, perchè fortificato dalla mensogna, perchè radicato dal piu abbominevole despotismo, perchè contrario al diritto e ai titoli incommunicabili di Cristo, ed alla tranquillita d’ogni Chiesa e d’ogni State.” (Coleridge, Constitution of Church and State, p. 167.) Would that Protestant England would listen to this warning voice from Italy!

† Rev. Mr Croly’s Essay on Ecclesiastical Finance, as regards the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland.

as his rule, and has been at the same time opposed, on personal or political grounds, to the Church, PERSECUTION in one form or other has generally ensued; and that not only from such men as Nero and Domitian, but from Trajan and Antoninus Pius,* men whose personal character and philosophical habits might seem to afford a pledge of security to all peaceable subjects.

2. Where the Civil Magistrate has recognised God's word as his rule, and has been well-disposed to Christ's Church, he has almost, without an exception, sought to promote its ends, by his official influence and authority. The first Christian emperor acted in this way; and whether such conduct be right or wrong, it shews, at least, that there is a strong tendency towards interfering in one way or other with the Christian Church,—a tendency which can only be effectually checked or regulated by interposing the authority of LAW between the Supreme Magistrate and the Church. And this tendency to promote their own views will always operate strongly, whatever party may be in power, a proof of which may be found in the fact, that even the Independents established themselves, when they had an opportunity, in New England,† and in

* Mosheim i. 157.

† Baillie's Dissuasive, p. 117.—“The Independents of New England have a better provision, not only a proportion of land, but a certain tax of money, laid on by the magistrate, both upon the members of the congregation, and upon all the neighbours, though not received members of the Church. Those also of London, Arnheim, and Rotterdam, have been

Britain, accepted the situations from which the Episcopalians had been expelled;* and in the active and zealous efforts now being made in Parliament by the Popish party, to alienate part at least of the funds of the Protestant Church, notwithstanding the oath which the members of that party have sworn.† The fact is, there can be no neutrality in these matters. Religion is an active principle; much more active is the power of superstition; it will apply every engine of state policy, every prerogative of office, every resource of national wealth, to the promotion of its ends; and we deceive ourselves, to the ruin of our children, if we suppose that the abolition of our present Establishment would secure freedom to the Church or the Commonwealth for any considerable number of years.

But we are referred to France and America, neither of which cases, however, is favourable to the idea, that the Civil Government can practically avoid a recognition, to some extent, of the Christian Church; a partial recognition, indeed, it is, and such as leaves both countries in a lamentable condition,§ but sufficient to support the principle for which we contend.

famous for a sufficient care of a set provision above the ordinary, to the rate of £200, or £300 a-year. And lest the income should decrease with too large deduction for the supply of the poor, it hath been their prudence to admit none or few poor members of their congregation.”

* Neal's Puritans.

† Eneas M'Donnel on the Roman Catholic Oath.

§ See Rev. Mr Lorimer's able Pamphlet on America.

In America, the Sabbath is, by civil authority, enjoined as a day of rest, and its profanation is punished, by civil pains, more severely than is at all usual in our own country. The meetings of Congress are opened with prayer,* and in some of the States there was, and I believe still is, a legal provision for the maintenance of a Christian ministry.† And in France, so far from the Government standing aloof, all sects are endowed and supported at the public expense, which can muster a given number of partizans, in any locality;—so that the cases to which our opponents refer, as affording the fairest *actual exhibition*, on a national scale, of the principles for which they contend, are not instances of any thing like strict neutrality, in respect to public religious instruction, although they afford sufficient evidence of latitudinarian indifference to the nature of what is taught.

We need not refer to the case of the quiet Dissenting Chapels of Britain, which flourish happily under the mild and tolerant spirit of British law, seeing that they share in the civil benefits of that compact which subsists betwixt the Church and the Civil Government, although they refuse to be parties to it themselves.

IV. It is the *Duty* of the Civil Magistrate to do whatever he *can*, and *may lawfully* do, for promoting and securing the religious instruction of his subjects.

* Mr Cunningham's Lecture.

† Dr Burns of Tweedsmuir's Sermon, Appendix.

This proposition may be objected to by the infidel, who regards religion, in all its forms, as an imposture, and who denies that it can be for the good of a nation to be thoroughly leavened with it ; with such a man the doctrine will readily pass current, which affirms that the Magistrate has nothing to do with religion. From the serious Dissenter, however, we anticipate no opposition to it, limited as it is by the two conditions of *possibility* and *lawfulness* ; and, in point of fact, we find it admitted by the most strenuous opponents of the Establishment.*

But it is not enough that the duty of the Civil Magistrate, in this matter, is admitted in words ; it is of great importance that the obligations under which he lyes should be distinctly understood in all their variety and strength, so as that, if it can be shewn in the sequel that, in any competent and lawful manner, he has it in his power to promote the cause of religion, it may not be regarded as a matter of indifference whether he attends to or neglects it, but as a matter

* “ Nor lastly, is the question, Whether Civil Rulers *should* do what they *can* to extend religion? We constantly affirm, that the more zealous they are to extend it, in all quarters of the world, and particularly in the community over which they preside, provided their zeal be tempered with wisdom, the more worthy must they be of their high office, and the better entitled to be called ‘ Ministers of God for good.’ But the question is, What *can* Civil Rulers do in order to extend religion?” &c.—*Marshall’s Ecclesiastical Establishment Farther Considered*, p. 25.

of grave and 'serious responsibility,—a duty or a crime.

The grounds of the Magistrate's obligation in this matter may therefore be briefly stated :—

1. The first of these grounds is the great fundamental principle of Christian ethics, that every man is bound to serve God in *every* station of life, and to devote *every* talent with which he is entrusted, to the advancement of His cause and glory. This is a comprehensive principle. Let a man hold what station he may, he is to be regarded as the servant of God in that station, and is bound to use all the influence and authority which belongs to it, for the glory of that God whose servant and steward he is. This is the principle on which God designs to regenerate the world. That grand result is to be brought about, not by the exertions of any one class, but by the united efforts, and the aggregate influence of Christian men in all ranks,—by the influence of every man in his own station,—by religious Magistrates,—by religious parents,—by religious ministers,—by religious teachers of youth,—by the Christian worth and the Christian example of every private believer, each filling up his own sphere, and using the influence appropriate to his station, in furtherance of the same cause. The mere statement of this general principle should annihilate the false impression which seems to exist, that in urging the cause of a national religion, we would leave its interests *solely* to the Civil Magistrate; whereas we contend only that he is not exempt from the obli-

gation to serve God in his sphere,—that he is not precluded from consecrating his peculiar talents to the same service ; we demand him as an auxiliary, not as a substitute ; and we do so on the principle, that he is bound to serve God in his station, just as every one of us, on the same ground, stands obliged to serve God in our's. And need I say, what a prodigious impulse would be given to the moral and social improvement of the world, if men of all classes were just to act on this simple principle, that each is bound, in his own walk, to consecrate *every* talent to God's service ; every parent in his family, every master among his servants and apprentices, every minister in his parish, every elder in his district, every magistrate in his borough, every senator in Parliament, and every Sovereign in his kingdom. There must be no exception. If one class plead exemption, so may all ; if kings and magistrates refuse, so may parents and masters ; but God binds them all over to his service, and it is at their peril that they withhold any talent that is applicable, or may be lawfully used, for the promotion of his glory.

The principle, then, being established,—that every talent with which any man is entrusted, in whatever station of life, ought to be devoted to the service and glory of God ; and, it being admitted on all hands, that the Civil Magistrate has certain powers and prerogatives, which are *peculiar* to himself, and not shared by other men,—these powers and prerogatives must fall to be included under that general principle, unless

it can be shewn that they must be excepted, either by reason of their peculiar nature, as being inapplicable to the purposes of religion, or of their use for that end being expressly interdicted by God himself. The *onus probandi*, therefore, lyes with those who admit the general rule, and yet contend for the exception. It is incumbent on them to shew that the Civil Magistrate either *cannot*, or that he may not, *lawfully* interpose his official influence and authority for religious ends, and, if they fail in this proof, the duty remains entire, and is established on the ground of a general principle, any denial of which were inconsistent with the essential reasons, or rather, with the very being and substance of all moral obligation.

It may be said, indeed, that the Magistrate, acting in a religious spirit, fulfils his duty in discharging the civil functions of his office,—in the pure administration of justice, in the prudent care of the Commonwealth, in the ordinary acts of legislative and executive authority; and it is true that he may serve God in this way just as a tradesman or mechanic, acting in a right spirit, may make his ordinary employments part and parcel of his religious duty. But the question is, Does the Magistrate's duty end here? Is it exclusive or comprehensive of the more direct recognition and advancement of religion? In the case of a private person, the service of God is not confined to the ordinary duties of his calling, but includes every act by which, in his relation as a parent, or master, or servant, he can glorify God! And we see not why it

should be thought that the relations of a Magistrate are less of a religious nature, or why it may not be said of him too, that he is bound to do whatever he *can*, and may *lawfully* do, for the promotion of religion amongst his subjects. What he *can*, and may *lawfully* do, is a different question, which will be considered hereafter, but which, however it may be decided, will not impair the integrity, or diminish the obligation, of this great principle.

2. Another ground of the Magistrate's obligation to do whatever he can, and may lawfully do, in aid of religion will be found in those passages of scripture which have an express reference to his conduct in this matter, such as—"Be wise now, O ye kings, be instructed ye judges of the earth, serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss THE SON, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way;" (Ps. ii. 11, 12.) "Whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and ALL DOMINIONS shall serve and obey him." (Dan. vii. 27.) "Kings shall be thy nursing-fathers, and their* queens thy nursing-mothers." (Isa. xlix. 23.) "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." (2 Sam. xxiii. 3.) "Thou shalt provide out of all the people able men,

* The use of this pronoun has been regarded as a proof that queens, and, by parity of reason, kings are here spoken of in their *private* capacity, (Ewing, Wardlaw, Marshall,) but it accords with our general proposition, that all, in every state, are bound to promote Christ's kingdom, kings *as* kings, queens *as* queens, whether regnant or consorts.

such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness." (Ex. xviii. 21.) "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God; whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation, for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same, for he is *the minister of God to thee for good.*" (Rom. xiii. 1, also Phil. iii. 2, Titus i. 10, 1 Peter ii. 14, Gal. v. 19.)

But on this point I shall not dwell, since it has received a copious illustration from those who have preceded me,* remarking only, that it appears to me to be a dangerous doctrine to affirm that the New Testament, enjoining, as it does, the *duty* of subjection and obedience on all private persons, has, nevertheless, imposed no *corresponding obligation* on those by whom they are *governed*,—that *it* has bound over the subject, hand and foot, to obedience, and yet left the ruler free to act according to his own views of expediency.

3. Another ground of the Magistrate's obligation to do whatever he *can*, and *may lawfully do*, to promote the religious instruction of his subjects, may be found in the simple and undeniable principle, that it is his

* *Vide* Lectures; also Mr Brown of Haddington on the word "*Rule*," in his Dictionary; Dr M'Crie, Mr Willis, and Mr Brown of Anderston, on the argument from Scripture.

duty to protect the Government which he administers and the community over which he presides, from dissolution, taken in connection with the fact that religion is absolutely necessary, not only to the well-being, but to the very being of civil society.

The argument on this head is very simple; it amounts to this, that the Civil Magistrate is entitled to use every lawful means for the benefit, and bound especially to secure the preservation, of the community;—that religion is conducive to the welfare, and, in fact, essential to the existence, of organised society, and therefore he is bound to promote religion, unless it can be shewn that he cannot, or may not lawfully, have respect to religion at all

Now, that religion is conducive to the best interests of society, nay, that it is absolutely essential to its very being, is admitted by our opponents. “The question between us and our brethren of the Establishment is not Whether religion be necessary to society? We avow as strenuously as men can do, that without some kind of religion society CANNOT EXIST, and that without the true religion it cannot exist happily.” *

This is an important admission, and it furnishes, I think, a presumption in favour of the idea, that the Civil Magistrate may be competent, as such, to interpose for the support of religion; otherwise, it is plain that HE has not the power of PROTECTING THE COM-

* Marshall's Ecclesiastical Establishments Further Considered, p. 25, and again, p. 41.

MUNITY FROM DESTRUCTION ; that power which alone is capable of averting its disorganization, being placed, in all respects, beyond HIS controul, and interdicted from his use ; but at all events, it is clear, that his FIRST DUTY, as conservator of the State, is to provide for the religious instruction of his subjects, unless it can be shewn, on irrefragable grounds, either that he *cannot*, or that he *may not lawfully*, interpose for that end ; in other words, unless it may be shewn that *he*, to whom is specially entrusted the care of the Commonwealth, is the only man in the kingdom who may not use those means which are essential to its VERY EXISTENCE !

But lest this admission should be withdrawn by one party, or denied by another, it may be well to fortify the truth of it by evidence, which will shew some of the reasons, as well as the reality of the fact, and afford a presumption in favour of the expediency, as well as the duty, of the Magistrate's care for religion.

A very solid argument for the absolute necessity of a public system of religious instruction, such as will provide for the moral training of all classes, however unwilling or unable they may be to support a religious teacher for themselves, arises from the necessary inefficiency of every system of human law, apart from the influences and sanctions of religion. If we look to history, we shall find that no State has existed for any considerable period, without such means ; that in heathen countries, the necessity of supernatural sanctions has been practically acknowledged, by the care which

the Magistrate has shewn to provide for the maintenance of some form of religious worship.* And that, in professedly Christian countries, the unsettlement of the regular legal Establishments has been attended with political insubordination and social discord, or gradually followed by such a train of social evils, as threatened to undermine the security of States, and the liberties of private persons ; insomuch that, sick of its consequences, the nation has gladly reverted to the old system, loaded, as it might be, with many abuses and corruptions.† No society has existed where law was not supported by religion. And the reason of this it is not difficult to discover ; for if we enquire into the necessary limits of human legislation, we shall find that by far the most powerful springs of action are altogether beyond its province, and that, as some of the highest duties cannot be enforced, so many of the most destructive vices cannot be checked by the *direct*, exercise of human authority.‡ Every code of human law

* Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses has exhausted this subject.

† See History of England, 1642-1666, and History of France, 1789-1815. Allison's admirable work on the French Revolution is highly instructive on this head, especially the practical recantation of Robespierre.

‡ Strange to say, this *necessary defect in human law* has been urged in Parliament as an objection to all civil enactments respecting public religion and morals, as if the *direct* object of such enactments were to make men *pious or charitable* by Act of Parliament ! Their object is to remove hindrances, and afford

is necessarily defective, inasmuch as it can only denounce the *open violation* of duty in *any* case, and not even that in *all*; it takes no cognizance of some of the highest virtues, those which are said to be of imperfect obligation, such as gratitude and charity, either in the way of reward, when they are observed, or of punishment when they are neglected; it affords no motive to any kind of duty, other than the fear of punishment, and this is effectual only where temptation is overbalanced by the certainty of detection, and the severity of penal infliction.* Whereas, if we could enlighten the CONSCIENCE which is in every human breast, each man would have a MORAL GOVERNOR within, more powerful by far for the prevention of crime, than all the vigilance of police, or all the terrors of a standing army! And to a wise Legislator,

facilities, for the operation of those *moral* means, which, through the blessing of God, may have that effect. Thus the Sabbath Bill might remove *obstacles* which at present prevent many of the trading and working classes from observing the Sabbath; and the Educational and other Acts of Parliament might bring the *means of moral instruction* into contact with the mass of society. It is from the use of such means that we anticipate a moral result; and surely it is no more absurd to say, that by such means Parliament may contribute to make men religious and moral, than to affirm, that, by other measures, it may secure the observance of justice between man and man, the peace, good order, and welfare of society. That human law, by itself, cannot secure this, is the very strength of our argument.

* *Vide* Warburton's Alliance.

this method will be recommended by these three considerations ; 1st, That it is better to *prevent* crime than to *punish* it, if indeed it be right to punish crime at all, where the means of prevention have been neglected ; 2dly, That a much larger amount of civil liberty may be enjoyed by a nation which is imbued with sound moral and religious principles, than is at all compatible with the safety of the State, where the people are uneducated, or educated amiss ; and the restraints which human passion require, may be drawn rather from their own moral nature, as in Scotland, than from the coercive Bills of Parliament, as in Ireland ; and 3dly, That this is “ the *cheap* defence ” of society ; and is recommended, not less by its economy, than its effectiveness, seeing that much more is saved to the country, in the shape of diminished expenditure for the suppression and punishment of crime, than is required for the maintenance of public instruction,—a signal proof of which is afforded by the case of Ireland at the present day, where twenty-five regiments are required for checking insubordination, and only two of these stationed in the large and populous province of Ulster, where a sound Protestant education, and an effective gospel ministry are at work.

Whether, therefore, the Civil Magistrate has regard to the maintenance of popular liberty with as few restraints as possible, or to the prevention of crime at the least expense of punishment, or to the economical management of those resources which are placed at his disposal for the defence and preservation of

society ; it appears to be his first duty to provide for the public instruction of the people in religion, unless he be plainly incompetent, or expressly prohibited by a higher power to do so.

I am aware that all these general reasonings on this subject have been condemned by a respectable writer,* on the ground that any question which relates to *the right constitution of the Christian Church* falls to be determined only by an appeal to Scripture. But here lies the pervading error of his speculations. The question does not relate to *the constitution of the Church*, it relates to *the duty of the Civil Magistrate* towards the Church, and towards his subjects. The constitution of the Church is supposed to be formed after the scriptural warrant or model, and to be entire in itself, whether the Magistrate gives or withholds his aid ; but the Church being settled according to Scripture, the question arises respecting its relation to the Civil power, and the duties, if there be any, which the Government owes to it. And, as the question relates, not to the constitution or polity of the Church, but to the rights and duties of the Magistrate, so, in discussing it, we are not confined to the New Testament, but may deduce our arguments from the dictates of reason and experience, respecting the ends and uses of the Magistratic Office, as well as from the general views presented in Scripture, respecting the character and conduct of those by whom that office should be

* Dr Wardlaw.

held. Did the question relate to an essential element in the Church's constitution, the appeal would lye chiefly to the New Testament, illustrated, however, by the concurrent lights of the Old; but, in discussing the primary duties of the Magistracy, we are entitled to take a wider range of argument; and hence we may see, that it is by no means necessary that an advocate for National Religious Establishments should hold, either that there is little or no essential difference betwixt Church and State—for his argument implies that there is a difference, such as admits of an *alliance*—or, that Civil Government is founded on Grace,—for, were it so, an express warrant or model must be found in Scripture, not only for the constitution of the Church, but also for the constitution of the State itself; and we should be cut off from all general reasonings on that point too;* whereas, if Civil Government

* This theory was actually held by many of the Brownists in the times of Cromwell. *Baillie's Dissuasive*, p. 31.—“ Their great tenet about the Magistracy is, that no prince nor State on the earth hath any legislative power; that neither king nor parliament can make any law in anything that concernseither Church or STATE; that God alone is the lawgiver; that the greatest Magistrate has no other power but to execute the laws of God set down in Scripture; that the judicial law of Moses binds at this day all the nations of the world, as well as ever it did the Jews.” And *Barrow's Discovery* says: “ I am persuaded that the Magistrate ought not to make permanent laws of that the Lord hath left in our liberty. We approve all the laws of God to be most holy and inviolable and all-sufficient, both for

be derived, as we believe, from God the moral governor, then all the arguments which reason or experience may furnish, are applicable to the solution of the question, How far the *duty of the Magistrate*, as a minister for God, binds him to recognise, own, and promote, the kingdom of his blessed Son?

V. The Civil Magistrate *can*, and *may lawfully* do much to promote the religious and moral instruction of his subjects.

“What *can* Civil Rulers do,” says Mr Marshall,* “in order to extend religion? What may they do in their *official* capacity, in the exercise of that power with which the community” (God?) “has intrusted them?” “They may not interfere with the rights of conscience—they may not dictate to us what we are to believe, or what we are not to believe.”—So say we, but the question remains, is there no other way in which his official authority may be made available for the promotion of true religion? That a Magistrate may not force the conscience, is no more than may be said of a Minister, whose duty, nevertheless, it is to use other and fitter means for the conversion of men; or of every private Christian, who has not only

Church and COMMONWEALTH, and the perfect instruction of every member and officer of the same, in their several duties, so that nothing is now left to any mortal man, of what high dignity and calling soever, but to execute the will of God according to his word.”

* Ecclesiastical Establishments farther Considered, p. 25-26.

a right to interfere with the religious opinions of others, but is commanded to do so. * In all these cases, so far from holding it to be lawful, we hold it to be simply impossible to force the conscience of another; and all the declamation which is wont to be made on this head, is either unnecessary or little to the purpose. To say that the conscience of a man should not, or may not lawfully be forced, is to understate and thus to injure the case; we go farther and maintain that the conscience CANNOT be forced. As well may we seek to restrain the winds of heaven, or to chain down the waves of the sea, as to impose fetters on the freedom of human conscience, or on the volitions of the human will;—you may fetter the body of a man—you may fasten manacles on his arms and limbs—you may oppress him with legal disabilities on account of his religion, and in doing so, you may acquire the character of a persecutor for conscience sake; but fettered, manacled, oppressed as he is, his mind is free, his conscience sacred, his thoughts, his will, his religion, are still his own; and these no power of despot tyranny, or democratic violence, can either injure or destroy.

But must we hold, therefore, that *authority*, whether parental or civil, is a talent which can *in no way* be applicable to religious and moral uses? Because a

* “As no man has a right to interfere with the religion of his neighbour, so no Government has a right to interfere with the religion of its subjects.”—4th *Voluntary Lecture*, *Edin.* This statement requires explanation.

parent cannot force the conscience of his child, is he therefore forbidden in any way to exercise his authority in things sacred over the members of his household? On the contrary, was not Eli, although a good man, severely reprimanded and punished, for merely reproving his sons, and that too when they had arrived at a mature age, when he should have restrained them by a more vigorous exercise of authority? And what was the high testimony which God bestowed on Abraham? was it not, "I know Abram, saith the Lord, that he will COMMAND his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord and do justice and judgment?" And, as to the exercise of Magistratical authority, can you point to a single case, in which a king, whether Jew or Gentile, sought to promote the cause of pure religion by enactments in its favour, who is not specially commended for doing so; or, on the other hand, to a single instance in which a godless ruler neglected his duty in this matter, without incurring the Divine displeasure, and involving himself and his people in dreadful judgments?

Joshua, Moses, David, Solomon, Jehoahas, Asa, Jehosaphat, Hezekiah, Josiah, Nehemiah, all these are mentioned with special commendation, for this very reason, that they reformed the abuses and promoted the observance of Divine worship, while as many more of the kings of Israel and Judah were reprobated and punished along with their people for the neglect of it. Should it be said that the Jewish was a peculiar sys-

tem, and that the exercise of authority in such matters sprung out of the Theocracy; I answer, *1st*, That this remark has no bearing whatever on the purpose for which these cases are cited in the present stage of our argument; they are cited to shew that *authority* is a talent *applicable* to such matters; and for this end at least, the examples of the Jewish history are conclusive: *2dly*, That the objection is set aside by the exercise of authority in the same matters on the part of rulers who had no connection with the Theocracy, but who are specially honoured in Scripture for promoting the cause of religion: "When the word came unto the king of Nineveh, he arose from his throne, and laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published by the DECREE of the king and his nobles, that the people should fast and cry mightily to God, for said he, who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? And God saw their works, and God repented him of the evil that he had said he would do unto them, and he did it not." * And in like manner, Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes gave proclamation and furnished aid towards the rebuilding of the Temple. And the devout Jews, so far from being jealous of such interference, offered up thanks to God, who had "put it into their hearts" to do so: and *3dly*, The objection is inapplicable to the Christian

* Jonah, 3d. chap. Ezra, vi. 22 —vii. 27.

Church, if it be allowed that the Decalogue is still in force ; seeing that the fourth commandment is specially addressed to those who have *authority* over others : “Thou shalt do no work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, (the parent is addressed as the ruler of his children,) nor thy maid-servant, nor thy man-servant, nor thy cattle, (the master is addressed as the ruler of his servants and dependents,) nor the stranger that is within **THY GATES**, (magistrates or elders who had charge of the gates of the city are here specially named as, in their own department, conservators of the Sabbath.)

These cases are referred to as affording abundant evidence of the fact, that there is nothing in the nature or necessary exercise of **AUTHORITY** to render it *inapplicable* as a talent in God's service. And if the Jewish Theocracy were of no other use in this controversy, it is at least demonstrative of this great truth :— That *authority* is *applicable* to religious uses, is sufficient, according to the rule previously expounded, to shew that Magistrates are bound to exercise it for these ends, unless they have been expressly prohibited under the New Dispensation to do so.

There is, notwithstanding the freedom of conscience, abundant room for the exercise of authority in matters of religion. If the thing commanded be right in itself, there can be no harm, and there may be much benefit, in inculcating the observance of it. It is very true that a child or a subject may refuse compliance with the command of his superior ; but this can in no way

affect the right or duty of such superior to exercise his authority, unless he is to proceed on the monstrous and impracticable principle, that no command ought to be issued unless where there is a certainty of its being obeyed. Although not strictly speaking compulsory, a command from one in a station of authority, is obligatory, and is calculated to produce the best effects, *first*, by clearly pointing out the line of duty to those who are under his charge, and *secondly*, by adding to that lesson the weight of personal character, and public station, which will be found, in most cases, to be a strong *motive* to the observance of it. Neither the parent nor the Magistrate is responsible for the *effect*, but only for the faithful discharge of his own duty. Nor is there such a distinction betwixt religious and moral duties, as would warrant us in saying that the latter may, while the former may not, be made the subject of authoritative enactment, either by a parent or a Magistrate. A parent and master who commands his children and servants to be kind to one another, and to all men, considerate, courteous, honest, and charitable, is, in point of fact, exercising as much authority over the conscience, and that too with just the same hope of success, and at the same risk of producing hollow or superficial morality, as the Civil Magistrate, when he makes religion the subject of his enactments, and seeks to secure the maintenance of divine worship, and the due celebration of Christian ordinances.

As to the rights of conscience, does it never occur

to our opponents, that one of the first rights of conscience, in so far as it stands related at all to the powers that be, is a right to instruction,—such instruction as may enlighten it, and guide it to just and safe conclusions? Conscience bears thus far a resemblance to *instinct*, that it is the natural inmate of every human breast, and is alike prompt and decisive in its actings; yet it is also, like *reason*, dependent on knowledge for its guidance, capable of being enlightened by instruction, and then only infallible in its decisions when these are made in the full light of truth. By conscience, every man is made a responsible agent; but it is only by an enlightened conscience that he becomes a virtuous one. It may, like our other faculties, be perverted, and when conscience suffers, the character must be debased. The Apostle speaks of the conscience being ‘defiled,’ and ‘blinded,’ in which case it prompts to the most atrocious wickedness. In such cases, a very great evil arises; for that faculty, which is one of the most active powers of our nature, and which ought to be the impellent to every thing that is morally great and good, will, if blinded or perverted, be equally active in an opposite direction; and the mischief here will be the greater, by reason of the intimate alliance of conscience with zeal; “a zeal,” perhaps, “for God, but not according to knowledge,” which prompts many a man to do what is morally evil with the more activity and determination, because he acts under a false sense of duty. Now, if conscience be thus dependant on instruction for its right

direction, and if, without instruction, it may lead to enormous social evils, such as persecution, anarchy, and tyrannicide, can it be the duty of the Civil Ruler to leave the consciences of his subjects in darkness, when, by enlightening them with sound instruction, he may avail himself of that powerful agent for all the highest ends of Government, and may, by simply enlightening the conscience, raise up a ruler in the bosom of every man in his dominions, more efficient, by far, for preserving the order, and securing the happiness of his kingdom, than all the forces and policy of the State? Nay, is it any thing less than a gross dereliction of duty, and an act both of great cruelty and enormous injustice, for either a parent or a ruler to deal rigidly with those under their charge, in the way of coercion and punishment, while they refuse to adopt such measures for the right instruction of conscience as might prevent the necessity of punishments altogether? If a parent shall punish his child for lying, without having previously endeavoured to impress the conscience of that child with the obligations of truth; or if a ruler shall inflict capital punishment for theft or murder, without securing for his subjects such means of religious instruction as might have prevented the commission of such crimes, then they shew an utter contempt for the most sacred rights of conscience, as well as for the highest and purest style of policy.

So much for conscience in its relation to Civil authority. As to the extent of the Magistrate's ability to promote the cause of pure religion, there can be no

doubt that it is liable to be affected by the constitution which he is called to administer, and the circumstances in which he is placed. In some cases, the executive may be so controlled by the representative branch of the Constitution, or both branches may be so fettered by the divisions which exist in the community, as to have little or no power to act in the matter; it may be questioned, for example, whether, in America, the Civil authorities have at present the power of effectually aiding the cause of pure religion; at all events, the Magistrate's power is limited by circumstances over which he has no controul; but this, while it neither voids the argument for a National religion, nor exculpates the Civil Power from the blame of suffering such a state of things to grow up through negligence, ought to be regarded rather as a warning against similar evils among ourselves, than as an objection to the duty of the Magistrate in more favourable circumstances. But this arises not from the ultimate limits of Magistratic authority, considered in itself, far less from any restriction imposed on it by God; but from circumstances which it may be the duty of the Magistrate to endeavour, by lawful means, to remove, and which, if removed, will leave his ability unfettered, and his duty clear. His power, if not controlled and overborne by hostile and counteracting forces external to his government, is sufficient, in every well regulated State, to secure many substantial blessings for the Church; and, with a more special reference to our own Government, as hitherto constituted, I observe;—that

He *can* and may lawfully discover, countenance, and sanction, the truth of God's word. This affirms no more of the Magistrate, than is affirmed of every private person, by the great Protestant principle, that every man may for himself discover the Truth, in the exercise of his own private judgment on the Word of God, with such helps as are furnished by Providence, or promised in answer to prayer,—and is bound to give his public testimony and sanction to that truth, notwithstanding whatever divisions and heresies may prevail. The question so often asked, Who is to be the judge? never fails to remind me of Pilate's question, “what is Truth?” and the objection involved in that question, against the Magistrate's public sanction to religion, would equally apply to the conduct of any Christian man or minister who should seek to propagate his peculiar opinions among mankind, unless, indeed, neither were to extend his instructions beyond the narrow sphere of that circle in which these opinions were already entertained. In this case, the Christian Ministry, instead of being a missionary and aggressive undertaking, would be reduced to the mere work of instructing those who invited us to lecture to them on their own principles, and in accordance with their own wishes, whereas the whole scheme of the gospel shews that the first work of a minister is to make converts or proselytes, and the second, to feed, confirm, and edify them, when converted and reclaimed.

He *can* and may lawfully provide by civil enactment for the decent observance of Christian ordi-

nances;* by protecting and securing the rest of the Christian Sabbath; by prohibiting, and, if need be, punishing the interruption of public worship.

He *can* and may lawfully call together and confer with the faithful ministers of God's word,† so as to concert with them ‡ such measures as may harmonize the civil with the spiritual administration, and prevent unnecessary collision, or injurious encroachment; to secure, by such means, if possible, the unity and peace of the Church, in which the Civil interests of the kingdom are so deeply involved, and to check or remove the abuses and corruptions which may have arisen.

He *can* and may lawfully place at the disposal of the Church, such resources as may, by a right appli-

* "As for our Civil superiors, we would rejoice to observe them *enforcing* the good laws of the State respecting the Sabbath, with greater rigour."—*Dr Peddie*, page 65.

† "When he (the Magistrate) shall condescend to call us together, we will shew our principles by our cheerful obedience, and give, on every subject he proposes, our explicit sentiments, our best advice."—*Dr Peddie's Letter to Dr Porteous*, page 64.

‡ When Dr Wardlaw taunted Dr Chalmers with departing from the Confession of Faith when he spoke of the Commissioner as an "on-looker," was he aware of the important qualification by which the Magistrate's power in calling Synods is limited, in the Assembly's Act of Ratification? "It is farther declared, that the Assembly understandeth some parts of the second article of the thirty-one chap., only of Kirks *not settled, or constituted in point of Government*," &c. &c.—*See Act approving the Confession, usually prefixed to that work.*

cation, be most useful in supplying the means of maintaining a well-educated ministry in every part of the country;—his *power* to grant pecuniary aid, and the possibility of such resources being usefully applied, cannot be denied, however the lawfulness and necessity of such appropriation of national funds may be called in question.

He *can* and may lawfully regulate by civil law, the distribution of Church property, so as, that while the richer congregations are adequately provided for, the poorer may not be neglected; and a provision to this effect is, as we shall see, highly necessary and desirable, “not that one class may be eased and another burdened, but that there may be an equality.” 2 Cor. viii. 14.

He can, and may lawfully *protect* Church property, giving to it the same securities which are enjoyed by the other property in the kingdom; such protection, and such securities as shall prevent the dishonest abstraction of it, and compel payment from reluctant tenants or trustees. If it be lawful for the Church to hold property at all, that property must, like every other property, be *protected by compulsion*, whether the Church be properly Established or no. The right to compel payment belongs by common law to *all* Churches by whom property is held, and it would amount to non-protection were that right withheld or withdrawn.

The Magistrate must be placed in circumstances extremely unfavourable to the useful exercise of his

authority, if he have not the power thus to interpose for the promotion of the best interests of his subjects; and that having the power, he may lawfully and justly exercise it for these ends, cannot be doubted, unless there be some express law of God or of man, paramount to the supreme authority in the nation, which prohibits him from doing so. That in our own highly favoured land, no such law has ever been enacted is matter of great thankfulness; that in the word of God no such interdict can be found, may be assumed until our opponents produce it. But apart from express statute, whether enacted by Divine or by human authority, it may be said, that such measures, especially those which have reference to the appropriation of part of the public revenues to the support of Divine worship, are inconsistent with *equity*, and cannot be enforced without doing violence to the sacred rights of conscience. Here are two distinct objections, the one against the appropriation of National funds to this object, the other against the compulsory method of payment; and as these practical objections have a nearer affinity with most minds than the more speculative and spiritual difficulties on this subject, a very short answer may be given to each.

(1.) It is objected to a National provision for the Church, that such provision cannot be made without an act of pecuniary *injustice* on the part of the Government, seeing that the property of a part, at least, of the community is applied without their consent to an object from which they derive no direct advantage.

Now, to make this objection valid against the laws for the support of public religious instruction, it must be based on the general proposition, that, in no case whatever, is the Civil Magistrate entitled to apply national property to any object in respect to which the nation is not unanimous; or, that in respect to every collection of public money, those must be exempted who, for any, or for no reason, object to its proposed application. If any one will affirm either of these propositions, and offer to establish it by proof, he is bound at least to shew that they may be acted on without inferring the dissolution of Government, and, indeed, the dissolution of society itself; for it can be of no use to affirm a general theory, on a practical subject, without attending to the question, How will it work?—Is it compatible with the very being of the subject to which it relates? Now, however it may be thought to be possible that the Church may be supported by voluntary contributions, I apprehend few will be found to affirm that the Civil Government of a country may be carried on by *voluntary payment of taxes*. Yet this objection, were it valid, would go to the conclusion, that the Government, not less than the Church, must be conducted on the *Voluntary principle*. There may be a peculiarity in some other respects in the case of the Church, but there is assuredly none in respect to the mere right of the State to apply money for its support, or in respect to the mere justice or injustice of such pecuniary appropriation. If it be simply unjust to apply a part of the revenue

to the object of public religious instruction, because such appropriation is done without the express consent of individuals, then must it be equally unjust to apply a part of the revenue to the support of schools, or colleges, or police, or navy, or army, or kings, or judges, or juries, or magistrates, because individuals are to be found in the country who have a much fonder attachment to their money or their theories, than to any or to all of these?

But such views proceed on a total misapprehension of the conditions on which private property is held in a social state. No man holds his property in absolute right; no man's property is so strictly private or personal as that no part of it belongs to the nation. Whatever is required for the defence and the improvement of the country may be demanded of him as a right, in the name and on behalf of the community to which he belongs.* He is not at liberty to enjoy all the immunities and comforts of the social state without contributing his share to the means of maintaining them; and even where his opinions differ from those of the Government as to the means of securing these, they must not be allowed to secure him exemption from the common charge; he is bound to submit to, but may protest against, the determination of those to whom it belongs to administer national affairs. The benefit of a representative system of government is, that it secures the

* *Vide* Coleridge's 'Idea of Church and State' for an admirable elucidation of this topic.

subject as far as possible against unjust exaction ; but the representative system must be abandoned if *individual opinion* is to be the test of justice or injustice in such matters. And is it quite certain that from a National Establishment the serious Dissenter derives no advantage? If the advantage be not direct, is there no collateral benefit,—no benefit arising from the diffusion of enlightened views,—from the general cultivation of moral feelings,—from the peace and order which the labours of the Established Clergy do in some measure promote, or is he excluded by any thing else than an act of his own will from a more direct participation in the benefits which it is designed to confer?

(2.) It has been objected to the method of supporting the Ministers of our Church, that it is *compulsory*, and in this respect of a totally different character from that which was in use in Apostolic times, and is yet practised by Dissenting Communities. There is on this subject great confusion of thought, both among the friends and the opponents of the Church, and to that confusion alone is to be ascribed the effect which this objection has produced. A very slight explanation will serve to remove the one and to refute the other.

We deny, then, that the method of supporting the National Clergy is compulsory in any sense in which the same may not be affirmed, with equal truth, of all other ministers who draw their income from property.

The endowments of the National Church are, in respect of the act of donation, purely voluntary. A large part of them was given, or bequeathed, by indi-

viduals, and the remainder by the unconstrained act of the National Government. The nation has a *will* : and that part of her property was transferred, by a free and uncompelled act of the national will, to the Church and her Ministers. The only difference betwixt her case and that of Dissenting Churches is, that while they receive their funds from the will of individuals, she has received a part of her's from the will of the nation at large. That will, expressed through the constitutional organ of Parliament, bestowed these funds on the Church ; and unless it be held that a nation can have no will, or that her will did not, in point of fact, make this donation to the Church, we see not how it can be denied, that, in their origin, her resources are purely voluntary.

There may be a difference in some other respects that are not under our present consideration ; but in respect of the voluntary origin at least of their respective resources, the Established and the Dissenting Clergy are exactly on the same footing. That such was the origin of our endowments, and that we still refer to a free donation as the ground of our right to them, is known to every one at all versant in the history of these affairs ; and the voluntary origin of these endowments cannot be disproved, unless it can be shewn, on the one hand, that the nation never passed such an act, or that it was driven by compulsion to do so, on the other. If it could be shewn that the Church compelled the State to grant an endowment, or that she acquired her property by conquest, the objection might be valid, but not otherwise.

In so far, therefore, as the *donation* of Church property is concerned, it was purely voluntary in its origin; but it may be said, its collection, or payment, may be enforced by law: true; and so it ought, if it be meant to give effect to a voluntary donation of any kind; but this *compulsion*, arising as it does, not from any peculiarity in the law respecting Church property, but from a principle applicable to property of every kind, public or private, is equally characteristic of all endowments, whether belonging to Churchmen or Dissenters. The common law right of every man is to compel payment of a just and lawful debt; and this right is as available to the Dissenter for the vindication of his pecuniary rights, as to Churchmen for the vindication of theirs. Suppose, for instance, that any one freely gives a house or a piece of land for the endowment of a Dissenting Chapel, and that he does so, as the nation gave the Church her funds, by a donation purely voluntary; no sooner does that house or land become the property by law of the minister, or trustees, of said chapel, than he, or they, become invested with a common law right to enforce the payment of rents,—a right of which they cannot divest themselves, although they may waive the exercise of it; because it is a right essential to the very idea of property, as the subject of law. The tenants, who are the actual payers of the rent, may be *unwilling*, or *reluctant*, but that does not alter the voluntary nature of the tenure by which the property is held, as a free grant or donation from the party who had a right of disposal over the subject. The case is

not materially altered, though we should suppose, that instead of the tenants, some of the parties who had a nearer personal interest in the donation were opposed to it. For, suppose that a body of trustees having an unquestionable right to dispose of certain properties, in which they had each a personal interest, agreed to bestow part of it on the erection, or endowment, of a Dissenting Chapel; suppose that this were a voluntary act on their part, but that thereafter some of themselves being in possession of it, became unwilling, or reluctant, to pay the rent,—the chapel having obtained an interest by free donation, might compel such reluctant parties to fulfil the design of the trustees, and that, too, without impairing in the slightest degree the voluntary tenure on which the property is held.

When, therefore, it is said that the income of the National Church is not voluntary but compulsory, two errors are committed, 1st, The original free donation of funds for her support is forgotten; and, 2d, The compulsory exaction of a just debt at common law, is confounded with the act by which the Church was endowed. And when again it is affirmed, that the income of Dissenting Ministers is purely voluntary, it must either be held that they are not competent to hold property at all, or that, if they be, they have no share in the common law rights which belong to property of all kinds, whether lay or clerical, and which are *protected* by compulsory means in their case, if need be, not less than in our own. And of both it may be affirmed, that each is purely voluntary in point of

donation, and that each may be voluntary or compulsory in the mode of its collection, according to the honesty or dishonesty of individuals.

This proceeds on the supposition, that the Dissenting Churches are not dependent on mere gratuities, or fees, but that they *hold property of some kind*. Our argument is limited to such cases ; it being enough for us to shew that the two are exactly on a footing in respect to voluntary or reluctant payment, in the case supposed of each having some property to which the ordinary law of debtor and creditor may be applied. This includes almost all the Dissenting Churches known amongst ourselves ; for some have houses, some endowments, some feus, some lands, and all have at least a property in the *building*, which is let out. Now what we affirm is, that however voluntary the donation may have been, in virtue of which these funds came into their possession, they are in respect to the law applicable to their collection, as compulsory as are the revenues of the Establishment ; the managers may prosecute the man who holds their property and compel payment, not less than the Established Clergy.

If there were a law in the Statute Book prohibiting Dissenting Societies from holding property, or if they were deprived of the legal means of enforcing the collection of their revenues, they would be subject to a civil disability of which they would have great reason to complain ; but there being no such law, their property is fenced with the same protection, and may be

made available by the same compulsory means which are applicable to property of every other description.

The question, then, is not whether property voluntarily bestowed may be compulsorily protected, but whether it is *right for the Church to hold property at all?* If by voluntary donation she does receive such property, it must, under the common law, be subject to a compulsory method of collection, should the legal return from it be withheld; and the only possible way of avoiding a community of interest in these compulsory laws, is by disclaiming all right of property, and depending entirely on the spontaneous free-will offerings of individuals. If this plan were adopted, it must put an end to every thing in the shape of rents, feus, interest, or other income, exigible at common law, as the legal product of property; it is inconsistent with the mercantile use of property in places of worship, not less than of property in houses or lands; and the only resource for the Church in such cases, must be to betake itself to one of two methods of support,—*gratuities*, on the one hand, freely offered by individuals, without reference to the right of sitting in chapel, or to any other right; or to *fees*, on the other, charged as a condition on which the privileges of instruction, or the labour of the minister in performing ceremonies or dispensing ordinances, are bestowed.*

The objections, then, to the appropriation of National

* Croly, 24.

property for the maintenance of Divine worship, and to the compulsory collection of the income arising from that property, have no validity or value, unless it can be shewn, not only that the Church may safely act on the voluntary principle, but that the State should also introduce the *voluntary principle* in the *payment of taxes*, on the one hand, and in the payment of *rents and debts*, upon the other.

The argument on this and the preceding head, might have been stated with reference to the Nation rather than to the Magistrate, so as to exhibit the responsibility which attaches to us all, in the matter of providing a National System of Religious Instruction,* and the duty of instructing our representatives to make such a provision in Parliament. Thus it might have been better adapted to the genius of our representative system of Government; but the considerations on which the argument in both cases rests being similar, we were willing to meet the difficulties of the question in what is generally regarded as their most formidable shape.

VI. It is not expedient that a Minister should be left to depend exclusively on his own flock for support, nor is it possible to secure, on that plan, the *pure* religious instruction of all classes in the State.

Our argument on this head is strictly Scriptural, and depends on these and the like considerations:—

* See Mr Brown's Lecture for an admirable view of National responsibility.

(1.) The conduct of Paul in reference to the Church of Corinth. While he asserts his right to maintenance as a reward for his labours, (1 Cor. ix. 3.) he declares that he had not “used this power,” and why? “*lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ,*” (v. 22, 23.) and “*that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion.*” (2 Cor. xi. 9.) The system, then, which leaves a Pastor to depend on the contributions of his own flock, was felt by St Paul to be attended with inconveniences,—such inconveniences as threatened to interfere with *the cause of the Gospel*, and the *edification of the Church*. But while he *refused* to accept support from the Church of Corinth, he *took aid*, during his ministry at Corinth, from the brethren of Macedonia, (2 Cor. xi. 9), preferring to receive his supplies, not directly from the people amongst whom he was labouring at the time, but from others at a distance from the scene of his labours. Hence, even “where the Church is left to avail itself of the spontaneous contributions of its members, I hold that she is only following the example, and acting in the spirit of the apostle, when, instead of leaving any Minister to depend immediately on the flock among which he labours, she provides, that contributions from other sources should be gathered together, and applied so as to exempt him from the inconveniences of personal dependence on the people among whom he labours.” *

(2.) Scripture intimates, and experience proves, the

* Sermon by the Author, on Christ's Kingdom in it's relation to the Civil Power, p. 33.

likelihood of errors creeping into the Church through the avarice of religious teachers, and the superstition of their followers,—under any system which leaves the former to make what they can by the preaching of the Gospel. It should be remembered, that “ministers are but men, and that the best of men are but men at the best,”—and that, through the remaining corruption of their natures, Christ’s servants, if placed in a situation of dependence or temptation, will not be exempt from the infirmities which such a situation is fitted to foster or disclose. Hence the Apostles, even in the days of primitive purity and zeal, declared “there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision; whose mouths must be stopped; who subvert whole houses, *teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre’s sake.*” (Titus i. 10, also 1 Tim. iii. 3.—Titus i. 7.) It is true, that this grievous error has its root in the natural depravity of the human heart, which is common to all parties; but that depravity ought not to be overlooked in estimating the probable consequences of any particular system; and should a regulated income, arising from other sources than the good-will of the congregation, be thought more likely to check its operation in that direction, this may be regarded as an argument for the system by which such an income is secured. If we look to the operation of the Voluntary principle, where it has been allowed free scope, whether in ancient or modern times, we shall see how important it is to bear this warning in mind; for one of our ablest opponents

has admitted, that “the Church was corrupted by *wealth* before it was corrupted by power;” * and Mr Gibson, in his admirable pamphlet, has exhibited some of the evidence on which that statement is founded. † In more modern times, the state of the Popish Church in Ireland, as exhibited by one of her own Priests, affords demonstrative evidence of this melancholy fact. “The revenue of the Parish (Popish) Priest is derived from a variety of sources. There are Confession dues, Marriage dues, Baptism dues, and dues for Anointing.” “If no money was to be paid on such occasions, all things would go on well, and the whole scene would be religious and edifying. But the intermixture of money transactions and money altercations, changes the entire scene, and proves at once a fatal counter-action to all the previous works of devotion.” “The custom, on the face of it, bears an unholy complexion. It transforms religious rites into merchantable commodities, which the Priest prices and turns to his own advantage in the best manner he can.” “In short, the entire system at present pursued by the Irish Catholic Clergy, as to money matters, or matters of Church Finance, is to make the very most of their ministry in gross and in detail; and regardless of consequences,

* Mr Douglas of Cavers.

† The Principle of Voluntary Churches, and not the Principle of an Establishment, proved to be the Real Origin of Romish and Priestly Domination. By Rev. James Gibson, Glasgow.

to render every part and parcel of religion, whether we regard the administration of sacraments, or the celebration of Divine worship, subservient to the considerations of self-interest." *

That this system has a tendency to introduce and maintain superstitious errors, is affirmed by Mr Croly. "Doctrines are frequently advanced, prompted by cupidity,—not very consonant to reason or the scriptures; and the congregation is led into error in order to replenish the coffers of the Priest. The love of filthy lucre has done much mischief of this kind in the Church. Is not the present dependent state of the Priesthood in question, a stimulus to these extravagancies and abuses? Would an independent high-minded Priesthood descend to such sacrilegious artifices to extract money from the pockets of the ignorant? No doubt, impositions of the kind will be kept up to the end of time under all circumstances; but then let this be the work of perverse individuals, who, by good discipline, may be detected and punished, and not the result of a SYSTEM receiving the sanction of Church authority."

The intelligent reader will now be able to explain for himself the apparent inconsistency which has been charged against our argument, as if, at one time, we represented voluntary contributions as inadequate for the support of a Christian Ministry, and at another, as the fertile source of superabundant clerical wealth.

* Rev. D. Croly's Essay on Eccl. Finance, pp. 28, 29, 57.

It is PURE religious instruction for which we contend ; and there can be no real inconsistency in saying, that for such instruction on a large scale, the means provided by that system are inadequate, while we hold, notwithstanding, that, tempted by penury and dependence, the Priesthood may so *corrupt* and add to religious ordinances, as to make them the source of a lucrative return, among an ignorant and superstitious multitude.—For, besides the inherent depravity of the Priesthood, which lays THEM open to this temptation, be it remembered,

(3.) That the people are equally depraved,—that to them the pure Gospel is far from being inviting or attractive,—and that, while they cannot exist without some form of religion, they are anxious to escape the pure spiritual enforcement of Divine Truth, and would willingly have the prophets to prophesy smooth things, to prophesy deceits,—“ saying peace peace when there is no peace.” The universal depravity of the people should not be forgotten, or lightly considered in reference to this argument ; for that depravity operates in a variety of ways, so as to affect the success or the purity of the Gospel Ministry, especially where that ministry is dependent on popular taste. For, *first*, It operates in the way of checking the purity of discipline, impairing the faithfulness of preaching, and superinducing errors and superstitions ; and, *secondly*, in the way of deadening that desire for pure truth, which, on the supposition that the Gospel is to be left to the ordinary laws of demand and supply, is the only se-

curity for the existence of a Gospel Ministry at all. So long as men are *men*, there will be a demand for religious ordinances of some kind ; but so long as men are *depraved*, that demand will be for a corrupted form of religion.

In reference to the pure truth of Christ's Gospel, the usual laws of demand and supply are not applicable ; and herein consists, as has been admirably shewn by Dr Chalmers, the fallacy of Adam Smith's Theory on the subject. To all the commodities needful for the preservation or comfort of our animal nature, these laws may be applicable, but not so to the necessities of our spiritual nature. One of the effects of our depravity is, our apathy, or rather aversion to what is really good for us. There are, in fact, three classes of subjects which must be treated on a different principle ; the *first* embraces whatever pertains to high mental culture, or deep scientific research, for which there is no popular taste, and there must be, therefore, a public provision, as in our Universities and Institutes.* The *second* embraces the means of relief from poverty, for which there will be unquestionably a clamant demand, but no certainty of a supply, at least on the ordinary principles which ensure a supply to a mercantile demand ; and hence the question,

* The London University planted in a metropolis containing one and a-half millions of human beings, yet scarcely able to maintain itself, is a striking proof of this necessity, besides the cases mentioned by Dr Chalmers on Endowments,

Whether, even where such demand exists, there be such a potency in man's affection, as to secure adequate relief, independently of a National provision for the poor ? a point on which we do not decide, as either alternative may be held on this subject, without compromising our consistency in regard to the argument for an Establishment.* And the *third* embraces whatever relates to the spiritual and moral renovation of mankind, in reference to which there is naturally no appetency, no desire, and, consequently, no demand, such as would seem to afford any security for an adequate supply of pure religious instruction.

How, for instance, would the principle of demand and supply operate in such a case as the following ?—A village or a suburb springs up, inhabited by two or three thousand persons ; they are poor and irreligious ; too irreligious to have any desire for sound instruction, and too poor to pay for it, were it offered to them on that condition : Is it not evident that they must be Christianized by a different system, if they are to be Christianized at all ? that a minister must be main-

* Dr Chalmers has been charged with inconsistency in maintaining that the natural and Christian affections afford sufficient security for the maintenance of the poor, while he denies that the natural and Christian affections afford a similar security for their religious instruction. But his admirable sagacity is conspicuous in this, that he seized upon a great discriminating difference ; there is a clamant *demand* on the part of the poor in the one case, there is no such *demand* in the other.

tained among them by resources derived *ab extra*, and must labour among their families very much in the capacity of a Missionary?

(4.) The missionary part of a Minister's functions affords a strong argument against the possibility or expediency of leaving him to depend exclusively on the voluntary contributions of those among whom he labours; for, in so far as he acts in that capacity, he has, according to the principles of our opponents, no claim to support, excepting from the gratuitous benevolence of Christians, awarded to him not for their own good, but for the good of others. Now, there are two great distinctions betwixt men, the one divides them into religious and irreligious, the other, into rich and poor; and the burden will, on that plan, fall on the religious—the large majority of whom must be poor—of supplying means for the instruction of the irreligious, however rich.* Now, if religious instruction be an object of national importance, if it be necessary and desirable that it should be provided for *all* classes, however unwilling some, and however unable others, may be to provide it for themselves, it is surely expedient that a regulated system should be organized; such as, while it exempts the poor from

* Croly says,—“The rich Catholics contribute in general but little to the support of their clergy. They pay nothing in proportion to their rank and means. They are extremely deficient in this respect, so that the whole burden of the priesthood, as to their support, rests, it may be said, on the shoulders of the poor industrious classes.”—p. 28.

unnecessary hardship, might leave neither rich nor poor unattended to ; and that the Minister should act in the double capacity of a pastor to the flock already gathered into the fold, and a missionary amongst the sheep that are still straying in the wilderness. The parochial economy contemplates both these objects, a district being assigned to every Minister, in which, as he might find some believers, whom it should be his duty to confirm, and edify, and comfort, so he might also find some ignorant, or unbelieving, or profligate characters, whom it should be his duty to instruct, convince, and reclaim. And, as the assignation of such a field of labour has the advantage of affording scope and exercise for both functions of the ministerial office, so, in respect to the people, it seems to give the best security that no family, whether rich or poor, decent or profligate, should be neglected or overlooked; and more especially, to be adapted to the necessities of those who, having no sincere desire for sound religious instruction, were not likely, of their own accord, or by a spontaneous movement, to place themselves under his pastoral care.

It may be truly said, that, but for the Established Parochial System, the irreligious amongst the upper classes would be left entirely to themselves, provided only they did not voluntarily attach themselves to a particular sect or party. If they attended no place of worship, they would not, in all likelihood, be visited by any Minister. The visit of a Minister acting on the Voluntary system, would too probably be regarded as

an intrusion, or perhaps ascribed to wrong motives. If one should be found bold enough to make the first experiment, he would be little encouraged to repeat it. Yet it must not be thought that the wealthy and educated classes of society may safely be left to their own spontaneous movements ; their hearts are naturally as depraved as are those of their poorer brethren, they are surrounded with many temptations, and many of them are living without God in the world. It is true they cannot by any means be compelled to receive the visits of a Parish Minister, but if, as experience has shewn, it be more likely that they will receive a faithful Minister, recognised as having the special charge of their district assigned to him, than that they will grant free ingress to Ministers of other denominations having no such special relation to that district, surely this *likelihood*, in a matter of so much importance, should not be overlooked in the argument. The Parochial Economy has too often been considered only in its relation to the POOR, whereas it is equally necessary and important, when viewed in connection with the best interests of the rich and powerful.

These observations may suffice to shew that it is not expedient to leave a Minister to depend exclusively on his own congregation for support, nor possible to provide religious instruction for those who most need it, on that plan ; yet, that the universal instruction of all classes in the truths of religion is a matter of *National importance* will scarcely be denied, and if

this be admitted, some other and more effective plan must be adopted. That the National Legislature is competent to devise and carry into effect such a comprehensive scheme as shall provide for the necessities of every district, by a regulated distribution of Church property, has been already shewn, and such a scheme would only be the more worthy of our approbation by reason of its preventing the undue accumulation of wealth in the case of aristocratic congregations, while it provides for the humbler congregations a decent independence. Were it only to secure a right distribution of private benevolence, we should rejoice in such a legislative enactment. But the State may do more, and has done more,—it has gifted property to the Church, under such rules as were fitted to maintain this regulated distribution ; and, unless it can be clearly shewn from Scripture that the acceptance of such property by the Church is unlawful, it was her duty to avail herself of the boon.

Let it not be supposed that we deny the potency of Divine Truth, or distrust the efficacy of those means which our Lord has provided for the maintenance and extension of his kingdom. We know that he could well maintain his Church, not only in spite of the cold neutrality, but in spite also of the hot persecution, of its enemies ; and that, though all earthly governments were to withdraw their countenance and their aid from it, that kingdom shall stand. But its stability and extension are secured by certain means—partly by the

labours of the Christian Ministry—partly by the obligations of the Christian people—partly, as we think also, by the countenance of Christian Magistrates; and no argument can be stated against the usefulness of the latter, which will not apply, with equal force, to the usefulness of the former, each being considered as a *means*. That Christ will uphold his kingdom without the Magistrate, or against him, is true; but is it not a token of its success, and a high testimony to its worth, when assembled Nations own, and acknowledge, and bind themselves, to protect and defend it? We plead for this, not in token of its weakness, but of its triumph! And until it can be shewn that the Redeemer has debarred Kings and Parliaments from consecrating a part of the National wealth to its support, we receive that gift as a public pledge of its acknowledged worth, and National usefulness!

If the precise method of providing for the support of the Christian Ministry be delineated in Scripture, we have reason to complain of the vagueness with which it is spoken of by our opponents. I have nowhere met with any thing like a specific description of it. Is it by gratuities or free-will offerings? is it by fees payable for duty done to individuals? * is it by a conjunct bond on the part of a congregation? is it

* O'Connell said in his place in Parliament, "My opinion is, that a Minister should be paid, like a physician or a lawyer, by a *fee upon every job done*." This delicate language might be

by revenues derived from property in chapels? is it by revenues from feu-duties? or from rents of houses or of lands? The practice in Dissenting Churches admits of all these varieties; and how then does their theory accord with it, from which it would appear that this matter is expressly ruled by Scripture? But although the *precise method* of raising funds may not be prescribed, it may be said the source from which alone they are to be derived, is indicated; but what is that source? Is it lawful for the Church to receive aid only from its own members? or is it unlawful to take aid from others not members? is it lawful to borrow money from parties having no connection with the Church, and to speculate with it, so as, by traffic, to raise a fund for the minister's support? When an express law is spoken of as interdicting one line of procedure, it is but fair to ask, whether the law admits of these expedients? The probability is, that instead of a specific reply to each question, we shall have a general answer, to the effect that, whatever may be the method in which the supply is raised, and whatever the source from which it is derived, the

curiously paraphrased, by applying it to the various duties of the Christian Ministry, such as visiting the sick, comforting the afflicted, administering the holy sacraments, and rebuking scandalous sin; but we forbear, if not from respect to the author, yet from reverence for the subject.

Mr O'Connell should know, that the Clergy prefer, and that they have no reason to be ashamed of *their* rents.

gift must be a *voluntary one*. Granted; but we have already seen, that, in respect of donation, the Church's property is not less voluntary than their's. The above questions must be discussed, before the public can be made aware of the probable results of the new system; and a vague answer will not suffice. For our opponents cannot fail to be aware, that important distinctions are involved in these questions—so important, that in former times they gave rise to conscientious scruples, and even to divisions amongst friends.—“The antient way of maintenance by tythes on land, or *set stipends*, they (the Independents,) do refuse; and require here the reduction of the Apostolic practice. They count it necessary that *all* the Church-officers should live upon the charge of the congregation, the ruling elders and deacons as well as the pastors and doctors. But all they will have them to receive is a mere alms,—a voluntary contribution laid down as *an offering at the doctor's feet every Lord's Day*.”* “The deacons were elected and ordained for the serving at tables, viz., the serving of all those tables which pertained to the Church to provide for, which are the Lord's Table, the tables of the ministers and elders of the Church, and the tables of the poor brethren, whether of their own body or strangers; for the maintaining whereof, we do not appoint them to go up and down to collect the benevolence of other

* Baillie's Dissuasive, p. 117.

brethren, but, as the Apostles received the oblations of the brethren brought and laid down at their feet, and thereof made distribution as the use of the Church required; so the deacons receive the oblations of the brethren every Lord's Day, brought unto them and laid down before them, and distribute the same as the need of the Church doth require." * Do our opponents profess or act on these principles?

What might be the aggregate or ultimate results of such a change as would throw all the Churches on the Voluntary principle we know not, but, looking merely to human means and probabilities, we should say that one of its effects would probably be—the speedy ascendancy of Popery. Even without any legal sanction, (which, however, *it* does not repudiate,) it is the most likely to acquire the pre-eminence on the Voluntary plan. It is an old, firmly rooted, and wealthy Church; its resources are inexhaustible, and the greater in proportion as its superstitions are gross. Hitherto the Established Church has been the great bulwark of Protestantism, against which Popery has for ages tried its strength in vain, and behind which the various smaller bodies of Protestants have rested in peace, as it

* Cotton's Way of the Church in New England. The Irenicum of Jeremiah Burroughes may also be consulted, as exhibiting the views of his party at that time, (1654,) pp. 19, 46, respecting the duties of the Civil Magistrate in regard to religion.

were in so many little creeks and bays. That bulwark has become somewhat dilapidated, or has not been duly extended, and the surge is already making head over it; but instead of reinforcing and strengthening it, the Dissenters are eagerly seeking to remove or destroy that mighty breakwater altogether!

THIS brief sketch of an Argument, so wide in its range and so cumulative in its details, is necessarily imperfect, but the reader will find in the subsequent Lectures abundant materials for completing it.*

* The author has just seen "SPIRITUAL DESPOTISM" which may be consulted for a copious illustration of many points embraced in the preceding Discourse.

THE END.

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LECTURE I.

THE NATURE AND LAWFULNESS OF UNION BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE.

IN appearing before you to deliver the First of a Series of Lectures, in defence of Church Establishments, and of the Established Church of Scotland, I think it due to myself to state, that I have not intruded into this prominent situation; that applications were made by the Society of Young Men, in connection with whose operations this course of Lectures has been instituted, to several clergymen of our Church, who, from their talents and celebrity, would naturally occur to the public, as they did to the committee of the Society, as much better entitled, and much better qualified, to come forward upon this occasion, than he who now addresses you, and that it was only when difficulties, springing chiefly from temporary circumstances, arose in the way of securing at this time the services of these eminent men, that I felt it incumbent upon me to comply with the requisition made to me, as President of the Society, to give the First of this Series of Lectures. I trust that you

will, upon this statement, free me from the charge of presumption, which, in spite of my official connection with the Young Men's Society, might have been, with plausibility, brought against me, if I had intruded into this situation, without a trial having been first made, to secure the services of some more distinguished and talented person; and especially, that you will remember that the Church has more able and experienced defenders in store, ready, if needful, to engage in this contest. While, however, I rejoice to think, and wish you to remember, that the Church has many more able defenders, I must say for myself, that I am not in the least afraid to engage in the controversy, and that I am by no means without the hope of doing something for promoting the cause of truth, and exposing the sophistries of our opponents; and I am the more confirmed in this hope, when I reflect, that, in the controversy which has been waging, in regard to Ecclesiastical Establishments, and in the victory which, in argument, has been won by her supporters, so much havock has been made among the reasonings and facts of our adversaries, and so large a share of the honour has been gained, by the young men of our Church. We hold that books and pamphlets are now in existence, composed by the friends of the Church, both within her own communion, and among the Original Seceders who remain true to Secession principles, and faithful to their ordination vows, in which, in so far as evidence addressed to the understanding is concerned, whether facts or arguments, the controversy is conclusively set-

bled in favour of the Established Church ; and if these various productions were as generally read as they ought to be, and as fully understood as could be wished, there would be little or no occasion for this course of Lectures. But lectures will probably reach some who might not be so likely to read. They are fitted to excite more interest, and produce a deeper impression, than what is read in privacy and solitude ; and although we cannot promise you much, either of fact or argument, the substance of which, at least, is not contained in the many able works that have been written in defence of Church Establishments, still we may be able more fully to illustrate and apply the valuable matter that has been provided, and to set it before you in a manner well fitted to come home to your understandings, and to influence your opinions and conduct. You must, not of course, expect, in a course of Lectures, intended chiefly to enlighten the understanding, and to inform the judgment, so much to excite your feelings, or to gratify your fancy, or so much of the interest arising from eloquence and variety, as in a public meeting, and you will therefore, we trust, listen with careful attention, influenced by a deep sense of the importance of understanding fully the subject under discussion, and of forming a correct opinion in regard to it, determined faithfully and impartially to exercise your faculties with that view, and offering up your desires to God for the guidance of the wisdom that cometh down from above.

I think I can promise, that, in this series of Lectures,

the leading principles on which Religious Establishments in general, and the Established Church of Scotland in particular, may be, and should be defended, will be explained fully and clearly, and that the most plausible objections by which they have been assailed, will be satisfactorily proved to rest wholly upon misrepresentation and fallacy. And while the Lecturers will not scruple to express their decided indignation at the atheistic, infidel, and ruinous character of the principles maintained on the opposite side of this controversy,* and at the unholy alliance of Infidels and Evangelicals, Papists and Unitarians, for the overthrow of Church Establishments, and while they may be obliged to give some practical illustrations of a favourite position of their adversaries, amounting substantially to this, that they, that is, the Voluntaries, are compelled, whether they will or not, to lead godly lives,—their godliness, according to their own account of the matter, being the only thing they have to live upon,—they will not offend you by profane parodies of Scripture, or ludicrous perversions of its meaning, by scurrilous jesting, or low vulgar ribaldry.

The argument in defence of Church Establishments, is an extensive and a cumulative one, that is to say, it consists of many parts or branches, and the strength of the whole argument depends upon the conjunction of a variety of arguments, derived from different sources,

* For proof of the propriety of these epithets, see "Vindication of the principles of the Church of Scotland," lately published by the Original Associate Synod.

and all contributing to establish the same principles, and to lead to the same result. The strength of the argument in support of National Establishments of Religion, cannot be seen clearly, or estimated fully, unless men understand the duties and rights, the obligations and responsibilities, of the State and the Church respectively, and know what materials, in regard to both these classes of subjects, may be afforded for determining the question, by the different sources of Scripture, reason, and experience. This being the case, we are persuaded that those men are to be regarded as most injudicious defenders of Religious Establishments, who dwell only or chiefly upon one branch or part of the argument, as if it were the whole, especially if from love to their favourite notion, they not only omit to point out how and where it comes in as merely a portion of the great argument in the controversy, but even, perhaps, speak slightly of the other branches of the great chain of proof by which the cause of an Established Church is upheld. The course of Lectures now commenced, is intended to embrace the whole argument of the controversy, in something of a logical form, and in distinct portions, and, of course, you will not expect to perceive its full weight, to find every difficulty cleared away, every doubt removed, and every objection answered, until the whole ground has been traversed, until the whole Series has been delivered.

The subject of the present Lecture, as stated in the

Prospectus, is "the Nature of the Union or Connection that may be formed between the Church and the State, the reciprocal independence of the two Societies, and the possibility of their Union or Alliance, on certain terms, without compromise of that independence." Now, you will observe that the consideration of these points involves a discussion of subjects purely abstract, separated wholly from the consideration of any particular Establishment whatever. It is quite possible, nay, it is a fact actually realized amongst us, that men may hold the great general principles on which National Establishments of Religion rest, and can be fully vindicated, although there may be no particular Establishment in existence to which they can conscientiously attach themselves; and moreover, that men may even hold the propriety and obligation of some union or connection between Church and State, who may scruple at admitting some of the principles commonly considered to be involved in the existence of a National Establishment of Religion. A Church, for example, may, in a certain sense, be established, and there may really exist a union or connection between Church and State, where there is no State Endowment. It is quite possible that the State, or the Supreme Civil Rulers, on becoming Christian, and considering the duty which they owe to religion and to the Church, may see it incumbent upon them to establish the Church, by giving it the sanction and countenance of civil authority, or, what is substantially the same thing, giving it a public official declaration of their approbation and good-will,

while, at the same time, the situation of the Church may be such as to render a State endowment unnecessary. Constantine established the Church, but he did not endow it. He only legalised the enjoyment by the Church of the property which it then possessed, or might afterwards acquire by the operation of the Voluntary principle; and this continued operation of the Voluntary principle, long after Christianity was, in a certain sense, established, was, as has been satisfactorily proved by Mr Gibson, in his most valuable pamphlet on that subject, "the real origin of Romish and priestly domination." The Church of Scotland, too, was established for some time before it was endowed; so that, in advocating the general principle of a union or connection between Church and State, we are not necessarily bound to defend a National Endowment of Religion, it being quite possible that there may be real union and close connection without this.

The general question of the lawfulness of some union, or friendly connection, between Church and State, being purely of an abstract kind, we are entitled, in arguing it, to suppose any condition of things which is possible, and not opposed to the common principles of human nature. We are entitled, for example, to suppose that the State, that is, those persons who, by the Constitution of the country, are invested with the power of making national laws, and of disposing of national wealth, are really desirous, upon right principles, of doing what they can to promote the interests of religion. We are entitled to suppose, that

there may be but one denomination of professing Christians in the country,—one Church, of which the Legislature, the Magistrates, and the great body of the people, are members. We are entitled to make these suppositions, because if we can prove that, in any circumstances, even the most favourable possible, there should be some union, or friendly connection, between Church and State, between religion and civil authority, we establish one great principle, we overthrow certain common assertions of our adversaries, and we lay a firm foundation for proving those great principles, by means of which State endowments in general, and the endowment of the Church of Scotland in particular, may be fully vindicated.

The most obvious and plausible objection to Church Establishments is derived from the apparent injustice and alleged hardship of compelling men, as it is commonly put, to pay for the support of a religion which they do not believe, or of ministers from whom they derive no benefit. But when men have once determined, from whatever motives, upon advocating a certain cause, they naturally strive to collect arguments from all sources, and to have some adapted to men of different characters. It seems to have been something of this sort that led our opponents to make some of their extreme assertions about the impossibility or unlawfulness of all union, or friendly connection, between Church and State. Statements of this kind, having the appearance of great spirituality of conception, as to the nature and constitution of Christ's Kingdom, are

likely to influence the minds of a certain class of persons who may be seriously disposed, and easily caught with the appearance of piety and spirituality, but who may not possess much perspicacity, or be very able to distinguish things that differ. For this class of persons, the assertions of Voluntaries, about the impossibility, in a lawful way, of any union or connection between Church and State, and the impropriety of civil rulers, as such, doing any thing whatever in regard to religion, seem to have been intended, and for this class they are well adapted.

That the Voluntaries are in the habit of asserting the unlawfulness of all union, or friendly connection, between Church and State, and the impropriety of civil rulers, as such, doing any thing whatever in regard to religion, is a fact too notorious to need any proof. If you attend, however, to what they commonly say, in support of these startling positions, opposed to the almost unanimous sentiments of the best and wisest men in all ages of the Christian Church, you will find that it is very meagre, and can scarcely be made to assume the form or appearance of argument. If you watch them carefully, you will find that they are not fond of remaining long on this high ground; they feel that the materials for arguing here are very scanty, and they are fain soon, although they will give no notice of their intention, and try during the process to elude observation, to descend to the lower ground, where they can find materials adapted to the more grovelling tastes of their hearers,—arguments address-

ed to their pride and their purses. Even while they profess to be arguing the great principle of the propriety, or lawfulness, of any union or connection between Church and State, and the general duty and warrant of civil authorities, as such, to do something about religion, they are in the habit, for lack of argument, of mixing up with it considerations derived from some of the leading features by which Church Establishments have been commonly distinguished, though not essential to the principles on which they may be defended, and even from the special abuses of particular Establishments. But since they have been so rash as to deny the lawfulness, or propriety, of all union, or friendly connection, between Church and State, and the duty, or warrant, of the civil authorities to do any thing whatever about religion, we must endeavour for a little to keep them in this elevated position, and examine the firmness of the ground on which they stand. Let us briefly, then, attend to what the Church is, and to what the State is, that we may see whether all union, or connection between them, is so unlawful and impracticable, viewed in connection with the nature and objects of each, as Voluntaries commonly allege.

The Church is a society founded and instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ, of which he himself is the sole Head, but for the government of which upon earth he has made provision, and given directions for appointing office-bearers, who, in managing its affairs, are to

act only in his name, and in obedience to his laws,—to aim at the salvation of sinners, and to employ, for that end, the preaching of the whole Word of God, the due administration of sacraments, and the proper exercise of ecclesiastical discipline. All this is essential to a Christian Church, and no Church should ever voluntarily, and in order to secure any temporal advantage, place itself in a situation implying the violation, or neglect, of any of these principles. It is willingly conceded that Christ's Church, or Kingdom, is not of this world, but is purely spiritual; and that, if it can be proved that union or connection between Church and State, of any kind, or in every degree, *necessarily* implies the headship over the Church of any other than Jesus Christ himself, the subtraction of any of the privileges conferred by Christ upon the office-bearers, or members of his Church, or the imposition of any restraint upon them, in the discharge of any of their duties, then all such union or connection is unlawful.

What, then, is the State, or Body Politic? It is to be viewed, in this controversy, chiefly with reference to its rulers—the civil authorities: and in this view it may be defined to consist of him, or of them, who, by the constitution and laws of the country, are entitled to make national laws, and to dispose of national wealth. The Body Politic, like the Church, is a society, or regulated union, in which there must be governors and governed, superiority and subordination. In every State, or Body Politic, there must

be a supreme power, from which there is no appeal, entitled to exercise absolute authority, and to act, in so far as any human power is concerned, according to its own discretion, in making laws, and in disposing of life and property. Voluntaries, who, of course, have a complete monopoly of liberal and enlightened principles in politics, will immediately cry out, on hearing this statement, against the tyrannical and intolerant principles of the supporters of Establishments, and therefore, it may be necessary to explain, that, in making this statement, we have no reference to any particular form of civil government, and that its truth is not in the least affected by the circumstance of the government being Monarchical, Aristocratical, Democratical, or a mixture of them all. But it is evident, from the nature of the case, that in every kingdom there must be lodged, somewhere, supreme and absolute power of making laws, and disposing of wealth and property, whether vested in the one, in the thousand, or in the million; whether exercised by an Autocrat, by a Senate, or by a body of Popular Representatives. In our own country, for example, the supreme power is, by the Constitution, vested in King, Lords, and Commons. They have not only the power, but, in a certain sense, the right of making what laws for the country they please, and of disposing of the life and property of its inhabitants. They may, indeed, abuse the power which the Constitution vests in them, exercise it under the influence of erroneous and mistaken opinions, or in an unjust and dangerous way, and

thus justly subject themselves to the severest censure, and afford good grounds for complaint; and every thing legal and competent may be done, by any one, to lead them to use it aright under the influence of wise and enlightened views. It is even competent for the nation, if it chooses, to alter the Constitution of the country, and it may become lawful for the subjects, in extreme cases of tyranny, injustice, and oppression, to rebel or resist. But, in the meantime, as matters stand, and in all ordinary circumstances, the King, Lords, and Commons, have an unlimited power and authority to make national laws, and to dispose of national wealth, that is, of the whole property which the nation contains. They have no right, indeed, properly so called, to do this arbitrarily or capriciously, in order to gratify their own fancy, or to advance their own interests, for they are bound to have respect, in all they do, enact, or determine, to the authority of God, the dictates of right reason, and the best interests of the community; but though some of the subjects should entertain a different opinion from the Legislators, as to the propriety of certain of their measures, that does not in the least affect the right of the Legislators to enact, or the duty of the subjects to obey. More particularly, in every State there must be a right and power, whether vested in few or in many, to dispose of the whole property which the nation contains, because the property of no man, or body of men, should stand in the way of general or national utility, and this supreme power, that is, with us the three Estates of

the Realm, have the power and right of determining what is for the national benefit. The conscience of every inhabitant of this kingdom is concerned in his doing all that is constitutionally competent to him, to induce those invested with supreme power to make a right, or what he reckons a right, disposal of national wealth ; but if they do dispose of any portion of it differently from what he approves, this gives him no right or warrant to resist the arrangement, or to alter it by his own authority. His conscience is concerned in his still continuing to do what is constitutionally competent to him, with the view of altering the determination of the supreme authority, and bringing the regulation of all the property in the nation into accordance with what he thinks equitable and expedient ; but further than this, no right or claim of conscience carries him, the true state of the case being just this, that whatever may be his views of the matter, those to whom, by the existing Constitution of the country, the whole property of the nation belongs, are doing what they will with their own—are disposing of their own property according to their own good pleasure.*

Such then, being, from the nature of the case, the power which the supreme authority in every State must necessarily possess, let us now advert to the ends or objects for which States were formed, and to which, consequently, the powers vested in their rulers ought to be directed. It may be admitted to our opponents,

* See Appendix, Note A.

that the protection of life and property, and the preservation of peace and good order, are the more direct and immediate ends or objects for which men entered into society, and instituted civil government. But it is also notorious that civil rulers are spoken of in the New Testament as ministers of God for good, and that civil government is described as his ordinance. We are likewise distinctly given to understand, that in consequence of the authority of God being interposed in this matter, a peculiar obligation is laid both upon rulers and subjects. We are just as much opposed to the doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance, or to the alleged scriptural authority and obligation of any particular form of civil polity, as the most liberal Voluntary in the land. But we think it impossible for any man to read the 13th chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, without seeing, at least, that civil government, implying the superiority of some, and the subordination of others, is to be traced and ascribed to God in a more precise and definite sense than merely this, that it has occurred under his providential government of the world, and that, in consequence of this, both governors and governed are under a special obligation, in their mutual relation, and in the discharge of their mutual duties, to have respect to his authority and purposes. God did and intended something peculiar, with regard to the institution of civil government, above and beyond what he is to be considered as doing with regard to ordinary events, occurring in the course of his providence, and this renders it a matter of positive duty in those who administer his ordinance of civil

government, that in that character and capacity, they shall have a special respect to his end in instituting it. His ultimate end or object in this, as in every thing else, was, of course, the promotion of his own glory, in the manifestation of his own perfections, and the salvation of sinners ; and hence it follows, that intelligent agents, knowing God's will, who may, in his providence, be led to be his instruments, at any time, in instituting or administering this ordinance of his, viz., civil government, are bound as such, and in that very respect, to aim ultimately at the advancement of the same great and benevolent object.

Let us now view the Church and State in conjunction, and see if there be really any thing sinful or improper, according to the allegation of our opponents, in union or connection between them, in all circumstances, or in any degree. Let us first advert to the grounds on which the doctrine of the unlawfulness of all union or connection between Church and State is founded. There is, then, first of all, the frequent use of certain language by the Voluntaries on this point, which, though it contains no argument, is fitted to excite prejudice against any union between Church and State. They ring changes perpetually upon the abomination of confounding and intermingling things civil and sacred, as if they intended to call up to men's imagination, the weakness, corruption, and loathsomeness, which, in physical matters, often attend improper and unsuitable mixtures or conjunctions. This, however, is mere words, and will not influence any person who can

think. In speaking of what civil rulers have done for the Church, and of its effects, they are fond of using certain language, which has a scriptural sound, although perverted from its scriptural application, and of dwelling upon the kings of the earth committing adultery with the Church, an idea which, of course, implies sin in both parties. Now, *after* they have once proved that all union or connection between Church and State involves something sinful on both sides, there could be no great objection to their applying to it the term "adultery," if it suited their taste, although it has no scriptural warrant; but we do not think it very fair or becoming, to try to excite prejudice in the minds of unthinking people, by the use of such language, before or in the absence of, proof; especially as the passages in the Book of Revelation, from which the language is taken, are, in this use of them, completely perverted, inasmuch as these statements are not there applied to the true Church, of which even Voluntaries admit some Established Churches to be branches, but to the apostate Church of Rome; and inasmuch as it is not said, as might have been supposed from the common Voluntary mode of quoting them, that the kings of the earth corrupted or seduced the Church, but that the apostate Church corrupted or seduced them.

These are some of the means by which they prejudice the minds of well-meaning but weak people, against all idea of union or connection between Church and State; but the argument which they commonly adduce in support of this position, is to the following

effect :—That the two bodies, viz., the Church and the State, are so totally different from, and contrasted with, each other, in all respects, that there can be no union or connection between them without the one or the other ceasing more or less to be what it ought to be. They are fond of enlarging upon all the points in which the Church or State differ from, or are contrasted with, each other. You will find this specially dwelt upon and discussed, under a variety of heads, in Graham of Newcastle's reckless and inconsistent attack upon Establishments, and in Dr Wardlaw's Sermon upon that subject. In discussing this point, they give us much sound scriptural statement, views with which, in general, we accord, while, at the same time, we cannot but express our surprise, at the folly of men who imagine, that by proving that the Church and the State are, in many respects, contrasted with each other, and especially, that the Church is a spiritual society, they are establishing the unlawfulness of all union or connection between them. And here we may remark by the way, that the distinction between Church and State, between Civil and Ecclesiastical authority, and especially the spirituality and independence of the Church of Christ, are most fully asserted in the Standards of the Church of Scotland, and we defy the Voluntaries to produce, from the whole circle of Theological Literature, more distinct assertions, statements shewing a clearer perception, and giving more satisfactory proofs of the spirituality and independence of the Church of Christ, than have been

left us by the authors of our first and second Reformations, by Knox and Melville, by Henderson and Gillespie and Rutherford, who yet were all of them most decided supporters of the principle of National Establishments of Religion. But how does the difference or the contrast between the Church and the State, in their nature, properties, and objects, prove that there can be no union, or friendly connection between them? The Voluntaries will scarcely venture to assert, that the mere fact of two societies being very different in many respects, is inconsistent with any union or connection between them. The falsehood of this general maxim is proved by the facts of the union of the two very different natures, the human and divine, in the one person of Christ, without commixtion or confusion, and of the union of the soul and body, totally different in their properties, while yet each retains in union all its own peculiar properties. If, then, the alleged impossibility of all lawful union or connection between Church and State, cannot, as is evidently the case, rest upon the ground of any such general position, as the impossibility of union between two bodies or societies, which are, in many respects, contrasted with each other, it must, if it have any existence, be founded upon some of the special features of that contrast. The spirituality of the Church, both as to the objects aimed at, and the means to be used, does not necessarily prevent some connection between the Church and the State. So long as the Church is in the

world, dependent, in some measure, for the accomplishment of her objects, upon the labours of men, and upon external things, this, of itself, lays a foundation for some connection, friendly or unfriendly, between them. Voluntaries commonly assure us, that the State has greatly injured the Church, by establishing and endowing her, but they will scarcely venture to deny, that upon a variety of occasions, when the State, or Civil Power, intended to injure religion through the Church, it has actually injured it, and that, when it intended to promote religion, it has sometimes, in point of fact, done it a service. And if the one may thus, in point of fact, influence the other,—if the Church, even with reference to her most appropriate objects, may be affected by the mode in which civil authority is exercised, it does not imply any departure from her spirituality, that she makes it an object to have that power exercised in such a way as may best promote her real welfare. The Voluntaries have not given us anything like tangible arguments, to shew that all union or connection between Church and State, must necessarily interfere with the spirituality, independence, or peculiar functions of the Church. Since we are discussing an abstract principle, and since it is sufficient, at present, if we can shew that some union, or friendly connection, in any circumstances, is lawful, we may suppose that the State, that is, the Civil Authorities, have as sound scriptural views of the spirituality of the Church, and are as anxious that every thing

about her be regulated according to the authority of Christ, as the Church herself. The State is as much bound to obey Christ as the Church, and there is no reason *a priori* which should render it probable, that, in the formation of a union, or friendly connection, or alliance, between them, the State should propose, or the Church should agree, to any arrangement inconsistent with the spirituality of the latter, or her entire subjection to Jesus Christ. In consequence of the important points of contrast between them, on which Voluntaries are so fond of dwelling, this much is evident, that there need be no collision or opposition of interests between them, and that the great object of the Church,—the salvation of souls,—and, at the same time, the leading object of the State,—the welfare of the community,—will be best promoted, by preserving the Church's spirituality, and leaving her, as to all her internal arrangements, and all her peculiar functions and duties, in a condition accordant with the principles of God's word. This is undoubtedly true, and it is possible that civil rulers may see the truth of it, and may act upon it. It is thus quite possible, for any thing that has been ever proved, that the whole spirituality of the Church may be preserved, and that there may be no neglect or violation, either by the State or by the Church, of any thing about the Church, contained in God's word, while yet some union, or friendly connection, may subsist between them. If any Voluntary should say, that this, though perhaps possible, is very

unlikely, and should refer, in confirmation of the statement, to the actual history of many Religious Establishments, we must just remind him, that we are at present considering the abstract principle of the case, and that in making such a statement, he is quietly stepping down from the high ground of principle on which he has been foolish enough to place himself, and where we must take the liberty of keeping him for a little longer. Does it *necessarily* imply any diminution of the spirituality of the Church, or any interference with any thing in doctrine, worship, government, and discipline, which Christ has enjoined, or sanctioned, that the civil rulers should make official proclamation, embodied in a national law, that they approve of the Standards of which they find the Church already in possession; that they feel it to be incumbent upon them to give the Church full protection, and ample countenance, and every facility which they can render, and that they recommend it to all their subjects to attend upon the ordinances of religion? Yet, is not this an Establishment of the Church? Does it not imply a real connection between the Church and the State? Is religion *necessarily* secularised, is the Church necessarily corrupted from her spirituality, or interfered with in her peculiar functions, if the civil authority should prohibit all manner of work on the Lord's Day; should appoint chaplains for the legislative assemblies, and for the army and the navy; or should make provision for educating the community at the national

expense, and should invest the office-bearers of the Church, with some superintendence over national education? And yet, do not these things imply union, connection, or alliance, between Church and State? Do they not imply, that civil rulers, as such, are doing something in regard to religion? Even if the State should endow the Church, that is, devote a portion of the national wealth to the erection of churches and the support of ministers, although this is not an essential part of the idea of Establishment or union, how is the spirituality of the Church, or its peculiar character, as bound, in all things, to be obedient to Jesus Christ, *necessarily* affected by this? Is it not possible, at least, that the State may grant an endowment without attaching to it any improper condition—without requiring of the Church any thing inconsistent with her obligations to Christ? Churches and ministers must be supported by money, from some source or other, and surely the spirituality of the Church, its fitness for the discharge of all its duties, is not *necessarily* affected by the source from which the money comes. The question, indeed, comes substantially to be this: Is it lawful for the Church, in consistency with her spirituality, and full obedience to Christ, to hold property—to possess, according to the common provisions of law, a portion of worldly substance? Now, there is nothing whatever in Scripture to shew that the Church, as a body, ought not to possess property, any more than an individual

Christian, who, equally with the Church, is described as not being of this world, and is required to be spiritual. We have already proved, that the State has a right, if it chooses, to give to the Church a portion of the property of the nation; if it give at all, it must give voluntarily, for it cannot be compelled to give, the Church having neither right nor power to compel it; and when the State voluntarily gives to the Church a portion of national property, there is no reason whatever why the Church, if no improper condition be attached to it, should refuse the offer.

But, while there is nothing about the Church, as established by Christ, and described in Scripture, necessarily, or even probably, inconsistent with some union or connection with the State, and nothing inconsistent even with a national endowment, neither is there any thing about the State, and its character and objects, *necessarily* inconsistent with such an alliance. Voluntaries are in the habit of speaking as if they identified the State, or civil authority, with the world, the evil world, which is subject to Satan, and necessarily at enmity with God; and in this view, certainly, there can be no union and friendly connection between the Church and the State. But this is a complete misrepresentation. The State is an ordinance of God as well as the Church, and designed to serve ultimately the same great end. Those who are invested with civil authority *may* be all of them true servants of God, and worthy members of

his Church; and if this be kept in mind, the declamation of our opponents upon this point will, of course, produce no impression.*

Although Voluntaries are in the habit of alledging that Religious Establishments, as commonly regulated, interfere with the rights of conscience, yet we do not remember of any who have gone so far as to alledge, that this interference with the rights of conscience is necessarily involved in the general idea of some union or connection between Church and State, and therefore the objection about conscience, although very easily solved by a correct statement of the case, and by clearing away one or two misrepresentations, does not come under the present branch of the argument.

* We would have enlarged a little more upon this point, both for the purpose of removing the impression which the statements of our opponents, upon this subject, are apt to produce in the minds of unthinking persons, and, at the same time, exhibiting a good specimen of Voluntary misrepresentation, had it not been fully discussed, with great power and acuteness, in Mr Brown of Anderston's admirable little Work entitled "Church Establishments Defended;" to the 1st Chapter of which—unquestionably the best thing that has yet been written on this branch of the argument—we are not ashamed to confess ourselves indebted in the composition of this Lecture. For a very excellent and effective exposure of this same misrepresentation, in a somewhat different aspect, as put forth by Rev. D. Young, of Perth, see "Presbyterian Magazine," for November 1833; a Periodical conducted by Original Seceders, undertaken chiefly for the defence of the Church, and well deserving of the support of her friends.

It is, however, sometimes asserted, that all union or connection between Church and State, implies the application of force or compulsion to religion, a subject which does not admit of it, the State, it is said, as such, being able to do nothing else in the matter than use force or coercion. Now, not to repeat that the State may do several things formerly referred to, which imply Establishment of the Church, or Union between Church and State, and to which the allegation of the use of force cannot, with any appearance of plausibility, be applied, we have to remark, that no intelligent defender of establishments advocates the principle, that the State ought to bring its proper agency, viz., civil authority, coercion and money, to bear *directly and immediately* upon the inculcating of certain opinions in regard to divine things, or the leading men to adopt a certain line of acting in regard to them. Nothing of this kind is involved in the principle of Religious Establishments, or is now exhibited in connection with the establishments of this country. Direct attempts to form men's opinions, and regulate their conduct with regard to religious subjects, must be left to the Church, which should aim at, and can accomplish, this object only through persuasion, and the scriptural exercise of ecclesiastical authority. And with regard to the compulsion said to be necessarily involved in a State endowment, we remark, *1st*, That an endowment is not necessarily involved in an Establishment of Religion; *2d*, That it is *possible* at least, and that is enough at present, when we are discussing ab-

stract principles, that all the individuals, from whom any thing is demanded for the support of a Church Establishment, may give it voluntarily; and, in the 3d place, even if they should not, that there is still no compulsion, properly so called, in the case, that is, none involving a violation of the dictates of justice, equity, or humanity. The State, or civil rulers, give a certain property to the Church, which they are quite entitled to do. Being thus voluntarily given by those to whom it belongs, it becomes fully and completely the property of the Church, and of course must have the same principles, and the same mode of dealing applied to it, as property possessed by any other individual or society. Men may, if they choose, do anything that is morally right and constitutionally competent, to induce the civil rulers to alter this arrangement of property, but so long as it continues legally in force, any person who attempts to interfere with it, must be dealt with like any other violator of the law, that is, he must have civil coercion applied to him. So that the true state of the case is this, that even where there is a State Endowment of the Church, there never is, and there never, by possibility, can be compulsion, or the appearance of compulsion, except when some person attempts to withhold or abstract property which does not belong to him, property which the State has voluntarily and lawfully given to the Church, and in the use of which the Church is as well entitled to the protection of law, and to the compulsory exercise of civil authority on its behalf, if that should be-

come needful for the purpose of repelling fraud or robbery, as the proprietors of a dissenting meeting-house, or any individual proprietor whatever.*

We have now examined all that has been adduced by our opponents, in support of their position, that all union, or alliance, or friendly connection, between Church and State, between religion and civil authority, is unlawful and unwarrantable, and we are pretty certain that most of you will be of opinion, that seldom has an important position been brought forward in controversy with so much confidence, which yet rested upon so slender a foundation. But, in order more fully to expose the recklessness of our opponents, and the dangerous character of their principles, and at the same time to establish the important truth that it is lawful, right and proper, that there should be a union, alliance, or friendly connection, between Church and State, between religion and civil authority, and that civil rulers, as such, have something to do, and ought to do something about religion, we shall now give you a sketch of the positive evidence in support of this great position on which the strong chain of argument in defence of National Establishments of Religion is founded.

1st, The State and the Church may, and do consist of the same persons, and this circumstance renders some union, or friendly connection, between them, if not absolutely necessary, at least lawful, practicable

* See Appendix, Note B.

and expedient. All those who, by the Constitution of the country, are entitled to make national laws and dispose of national wealth, may be members of the Church, and in point of fact, in our own country, the great majority of them are so. The one function is quite consistent with the other, though each has its peculiar duties and obligations. A member or office-bearer of the Church, on being invested with civil authority, does not cease to be a member or office-bearer of the Church, and must carry with him wherever he goes, the obligations attaching to him in that character. He must carry with him, into every situation, a sense of his obligations to promote the interests of Christ's Kingdom, and the prosperity of his Church. The diversity of character between the Church and the State, prevents any well-grounded apprehensions of a collision between a man's duties as a member of the Church and a member of the Legislature. This should remove all scruples which a conscientious man might entertain upon the point, as it shows that there is no occasion whatever for a Christian, in entering upon the possession of legislative authority, to lay aside or keep in abeyance his views and obligations as a Christian, and a member of the Church; while, on the other hand, the identity or sameness of the ultimate end or object, both of Church and State, or of religion and civil government, viz., the glory of God and the good of man, and the divine adaptation of both to effect these objects, lay a broad and solid foundation for some union, or friendly connection, between them. It can-

not be contended, with any appearance of reason or truth, that national laws and arrangements, and the disposal of national wealth, either in point of right should be, or in point of fact will be, the same, when the supreme civil authority is vested in the hands of Christians and Church members, as when it is vested in infidel or irreligious men; and if this difference in right and in fact be admitted, and few, we think, will dispute it, it necessarily involves some friendly connection, or alliance, between Church and State, between religion and civil authority. *

2d, A friendly union, or alliance, between Church and State, between religion and civil authority, is a necessary consequence, that is, in point of right or duty, of Christ's supremacy, of his undoubted right to reign and to be obeyed, not merely as King of Saints, but also as King of Nations. That Jesus Christ is King of Kings and Lord of Lords,—that he has been invested with the government of the world, and should be recognised and obeyed in that character, both by individuals and nations, will, of course, be admitted by Evangelical Voluntaries, however unpalatable it may be to their infidel and Unitarian associates. Now, with respect to the practical application of this doctrine, we are neither Erastians on the one hand, nor Cameronians on the other, for both these very opposite parties have, we think, perverted and misapplied it. But we think it evident, that the doctrine implies this much, that the authority of all kings and rulers is, in fact,

* See Appendix, Note C.

derived from him, and should be exercised in accordance with his will, and for the accomplishment of his purposes. The Church and State, are, as it were, two different provinces of his kingdom, they belong to the same Master, they are subject to the same great general principles of government, and they are intended and fitted to serve ultimately the same great ends. There ought, therefore, to be an alliance, or friendly connection, between them. They should love and assist each other, if not as brethren, at least as fellow-servants. Their common subjection to Jesus Christ, and their joint adaptation to accomplish one great end, viz., the advancement of his purposes, should, when these features, in their respective situations, are known, through the study of God's word, be a firm bond of connection between them,—should draw them near each other, bind them together, and constrain them to assist each other in subduing the common enemies of their one Master, and in promoting his designs. If the rulers of the Church and of the State have any sense of their relation and obligations to their common Master, that should operate as a powerful motive to them both, to induce them whenever they come into contact, as they often of necessity must, to exhibit the deportment and the conduct of friends and allies, and not only to manifest a mutual friendly disposition, but to render to each other, if possible, substantial services.

Not only, however, is Christ equally the King of Nations and the King of the Church, and not only is there a firm ground for a friendly alliance between

Church and State in virtue of their common subjection to him, but besides this, it is also true, that his dominion over the nations is directed chiefly to the promotion of the prosperity of his Church; whence it follows, that the government of nations, in so far as it is vested in the hands of men who do, or who may know, and act under a sense of, their obligations to Christ, should be regulated with a distinct view to the same object, in other words, that men invested with civil authority, are bound to embrace every opportunity which the possession of civil power may afford them, of promoting the prosperity of the Church, and advancing the interests of religion; and this implies a friendly union and mutual co-operation between civil and ecclesiastical authority. The common Voluntary doctrine of the unlawfulness of all union or connection between Church and State, implies, in fact, though not in intention, in so far at least as many of its supporters are concerned, the denial of Christ's supremacy over the nations,—of his right to reign and to be regarded and obeyed as the supreme and the only Potentate.*

3d. A friendly union or alliance between Church and State, is a necessary consequence, that is, in point of right or duty, of the supremacy which true Christianity ought to exercise over all who profess to acknowledge its sway. Wherever Christianity is known, its doctrines and precepts ought to exert a commanding influence over men's opinions, plans, motives, and line

* See Appendix, Note D.

of conduct, in whatever situation they are placed, and whatever duties they are called upon to perform. When they go into public life, and exercise civil authority, they must still feel the same obligations,—they must feel, that if in any situation any thing occurs, any event takes place, or any combination of circumstances presents itself, in which they, by the exercise of any influence which they legally possess, or by the disposal of any money which is legally under their controul, can promote the cause of Christ, they are imperatively called upon, and cannot lawfully decline, to do it. This constant presence of religion, that is, of Christianity, with paramount authority, with an undoubted right to regulate the motives and conduct of men, in whatever situation they are placed, not only warrants and renders practicable, but almost necessitates a close and intimate connection between religion and civil authority,—between the right to make national laws, and to dispose of national wealth on the one hand, and on the other, the personal obligation incumbent on every professing Christian, that whatever he does, whether in word or deed, he shall do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, in accordance with Christ's revealed will, and in subordination to his purposes. To deny the supremacy of the principles of true religion, or of genuine Christianity, their paramount authority in the regulation of men's motives, conduct, and influence, in every situation in life, is to put a most unscriptural limitation upon the authority of God's revealed will; and to ad-

mit their supremacy as applicable to civil authority, and to those who are possessed of it, is to lay a firm and solid foundation for some union or alliance between Church and State.

Your time forbids us to enlarge in illustration of these two great principles, but we are persuaded, that even the simple statement of them, obvious and common-place as they are, will come home to the understanding and the hearts of those who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and are devoted to his cause, and will effectually prevent them from being led away by that most offensive position of our adversaries, against which we are at present contending.

4th, We prove the lawfulness, propriety, and obligation of a union or alliance between Church and State, by the case of the Jewish Establishment, which was appointed by God himself. You are all aware, that in that divine economy, there was a very close and perfect union between Church and State, and that there was a National Endowment of Religion. The Church and State, under the Jewish Economy, were not, indeed, thoroughly incorporated, or identified with each other. They still remained distinct and independent, having different laws, different office-bearers, different duties, and, to a certain extent, also different members; but they were very closely united, very intimately connected; the priesthood was supported by a National Endowment, and all this was appointed by God himself. Now, you will remember, that we are not at present called upon to defend a National En-

dowment of Christianity, and that any thing which has been said on that point, is quite incidental, and is not to be regarded as bringing forth the strength of that argument; and we do not mean, therefore, at present, to attempt to estimate the strength of the support which the Mosaic Economy affords to a national endowment of religion. But we maintain, that it affords a conclusive proof of the lawfulness and propriety of some union or connection between Church and State; and the shortest way of proving this, will be by shewing, that the most plausible statements of the Voluntaries upon this branch of the controversy, although sufficient, if admitted, to deprive a State endowment of religion of any support from the case of the Jews, do not, even if admitted in all their latitude, tend, in the least, to deprive us of the weight of the divine authority and example, in support of the general position, that it is a lawful and proper thing, that there should be some union or alliance between Church and State, between religion and civil authority. The only plausible thing that has been said by Voluntaries, to evade the force of the argument in support of national establishments and endowments, derived from the case of the Jews, is, that God, being Lord of the conscience, and possessor of all things, might justly and equitably do what no man, or body of men, is entitled to do, and that thus the analogy between the Jewish and a Christian Establishment fails in the most important point, and the great objections to religious establishments, from their interference with the claims of conscience,

and the rights of justice, as between man and man, are left untouched. Now, admitting, merely for the sake of argument, that this statement is just, it does not affect the point at present under discussion. The discussion of the propriety or lawfulness of some union between Church and State in the abstract, cannot be founded upon a consideration of the *rights* of any party whatever, but must rest upon an examination into the nature, properties, and objects of the bodies proposed to be united or connected; and whatever may be the rights of men as to the consciences and property of themselves or others, there is no way of evading the force of the argument in favour of some union or connection between Church and State, derived from the fact, that God did unite or connect them, in the case of the Jews, except by alledging, that God's interference in the matter altered the very nature of the subjects of that union, in other words, by proving, that after the full establishment of the Mosaic Economy, the Jewish State was not a State, or that the Jewish Church was not a Church. Now, although the Voluntaries have certainly given us some very astounding assertions upon the subject of the Jewish Economy, we scarcely think that they will venture to go this length. It must surely be admitted, that whatever additional ends God might intend to be served, by the establishment of the Jewish State or Civil Polity, he did intend and fit it to serve all the purposes for which he has appointed the ordinance of civil government; and also, that whatever local or temporary purpose he

might intend the Jewish Church to serve, with its load of rites or ceremonies, he did fit and intend it to serve all the purposes of a Church, all the ends for which, immediately after the fall, he formed a Church in the world, and for which he has preserved and protected it until this day, the same in substance, and in every essential feature, although under different administrations. The Jewish Church had a "ministry, oracles, and ordinances,"—the Gospel, that is, the substance of Evangelical truth,—the statement of those great principles, which, in every age, and in all circumstances, must determine the justification and salvation of fallen man, and especially the ruin of mankind by sin, and their recovery by a Redeemer, and a sacrifice,—was preached in it, and its rites and ceremonies were all intended to shadow forth these principles. If then, the Jewish State was a State, possessing all the essential properties of a State, if the Jewish Church was a Church, possessing all the essential properties of a Church, and if they were closely united together by divine appointment, we have the express authority and example of God, in favour of a union or connection between Church and State, between religion and civil authority, in so far as that point is to be determined by a consideration of the nature, properties, and objects of the two subjects of the proposed union.

5th, The lawfulness, propriety, and necessity of some union or alliance between Church and State, between religion and civil authority, may be confirmed

by an appeal to the light of nature, as exhibited in the practice of almost all nations, in every age and condition. That in almost every nation, whose history is known to us from sacred or profane writings, there has been some union or connection between religion and civil authority, is a fact that cannot be disputed; and the statement of this fact is substantially the same thing as saying, that the light of nature, which has been always recognised as a legitimate source of evidence, is decidedly in favour of the principle which we are advocating. The fact referred to affords considerable ground for believing, that in the constitution of human nature, and of human society, God has made provision for bringing about the result of some union, or friendly alliance, between religion and civil authority, and that, therefore, such a union or alliance is not only lawful and proper, but almost necessary, the uniformity of the fact, in all ages and countries, affording some reason to believe, that the provision which God seems to have made for producing this result, has been full and ample.* Perhaps one of the most striking single illustrations of the truth of this position, that God has made provision in the constitution of human nature, and of human society, for some union between religion and civil authority, and that it is scarcely, if at all possible, that every thing of the kind should be excluded, is to be found in the case of America.

You are aware, that in the United States of North

* See Appendix, Note E.

America, there is no National Establishment of Religion, in the sense commonly attached to that term, and certainly no National Endowment of the Church. We have nothing to do at present with American statistics, for that branch of the controversy refers to the *expediency* of making a national provision for the support of divine ordinances, a subject which will be taken up in a subsequent Lecture, although we may remark by the way, that the Voluntaries, if not ashamed of their appeal to America, in support of their views, are, we believe, heartily sorry for it, and do not now talk so confidently upon that branch of the controversy as they once did. But we refer to North America, as shewing, that even where there is no State endowment, it has not been practicable to exclude all union or connection between Church and State, between religion and civil authority, and that this abomination, as Voluntaries reckon it, exists even there. In proof of this, we adduce the fact, that both Houses of Representatives have an official chaplain, appointed by civil authority, who opens the meetings of these Houses with prayer. It so happens, indeed, that at this moment, the official chaplain of one of the Houses, (thanks to Voluntary principles,) is a Papist. This is a fact, and it is probably the consequence, and in some measure, also the cause, of another fact, viz., that Popery is at present making most fearful progress in that country. But still the fact, that a minister is appointed by the civil authority, to open officially the meetings of the Legislative Houses with prayer, implies

distinctly the great principle of a union or connection between Church and State, as a thing which, in a country considerably Christianized, it was scarcely possible altogether to exclude, although, no doubt, it is most offensive to the consciences of some respectable infidels.

We refer further, in support of our position, that even in America they have not excluded altogether union or connection between Church and State, between religion and civil authority, to a pamphlet published about the beginning of this year, by Calvin Colton, an eminent American minister, resident at present in London, which is entitled, "Church and State in America," and has been liberally praised and quoted by Dr Wardlaw, although the attempt which its author makes to shake the American statistics of Mr Lorimer of Glasgow, is a decided failure. The pamphlet is written for the express and avowed purpose of supporting the views that have been put forth by Voluntaries in this country, regarding the state of religion in North America, but the author distinctly lays it down, that in the United States, Christianity is "part and parcel of the law of the land;" that there is there a national recognition of Christianity, and that this is a very important element of society; and he quotes in support of these positions, several passages from the highest legal authorities, delivered from the Bench, in the exercise of their judicial functions, proving that the Divine authority of Christianity is officially recognised in American courts of law, and is openly

and avowedly set forth as the ground on which, not merely blasphemy, but profane and scurrilous attacks upon the Christian religion are indictable and punishable, nay, are actually indicted and punished. And this plainly implies a very close connection between religion and civil authority. In making these statements, we are far from bringing any charge of inconsistency against our American brethren. There is no ground for such a charge, because though opposed, (as most of them are,) to a State endowment of religion, founded on the selection of one particular sect, which, perhaps, in their circumstances, might have been attended with difficulty and inconvenience, they have not gone so far into the regions of atheistic and infidel principle, (for this is their true character, although many of their supporters are not aware of it,) as the rash and reckless Voluntaries of our own land; they have not yet so fully cast off all regard to sound principle in these matters, as to deny the lawfulness of any union or connection whatever between Church and State, between religion and civil authority. But the object of this reference to America, is to confirm the argument derived from the light of nature, and the practice of all nations, in support of the principle which we are defending, to show, that even in America, the doctrine of our British Voluntaries, setting forth the unlawfulness of all union or connection between Church and State, has not been tried in all its extent, but is still, at the best a mere theory, and to point out how difficult, or rather impossible, it is, that in a

country where Christianity is generally professed, that principle should be fully acted upon in practice ; while, at the same time, the reference to America serves incidentally to show, what rash and reckless innovators our British Voluntaries are, and how far they have carried their principles beyond what the accomplishment of their favourite object, viz., the reducing all sects to the level of equality, required of them.

Another position generally defended by those who are opposed to national establishments is, that civil rulers, as such, those who are invested with civil authority, in that character or capacity, have nothing to do with religion, and should do nothing about it, while this, of course, is a position which the defenders of establishments deny. This subject is, to a considerable extent, identical with the former one, which we have discussed at so much length ; for if, as we have tried to prove, it is lawful, proper, and necessary, that there should be some union, or friendly connection, between Church and State, the union must be formed by the State. The Church is not so much called upon to act in the matter. The Church existed before the State thought of doing anything in favour of Christianity ; and, in general, in propagating the Gospel over the world, it will happen, as it has in times past, that a Church will be formed, and have made some progress in a country, before the civil power acknowledge the authority and supremacy of Christianity. The Church, meanwhile, must be going on, evangelizing the land,

preaching the gospel, and calling men to the discharge of their duties; and if, in process of time, those invested with civil authority, should come to feel their obligations to contribute, in every way, to the promotion of the interests of Christ's Kingdom, they will naturally think of offering to the Church, by whom alone this object can be directly effected, whatever assistance their controul over national laws and national wealth may enable them to render; while the Church has to consider whether or not the offers of the State are such as she can, consistently with the paramount duty which she owes to Christ, accept, and whether or not the acceptance of these offers would afford her any additional facilities for promoting the object which she is bound ever to aim at. Thus the formation of the union or connection must be chiefly the act of the State, the State being bound to offer, and the Church being called upon to accept or refuse; and of course, every argument that goes to prove that there ought to be a union, or friendly connection, between Church and State, (and we have given you five,) equally proves, that those invested with civil power, have something to do with religion, and ought to do something with regard to it. We do not ascribe to those invested with civil authority, any jurisdiction in or over religion, or any right to dictate modes of faith and worship to their subjects. The jurisdiction, properly so called, of civil rulers, extends only to civil or temporal matters; but they have a certain duty to perform to religion and the Church; they have in a certain sense, a right to do something in regard to religion, *i. e.*, to do what

ever is needful in order to the discharge of the duty which they owe to religion; and while they have no jurisdiction in religious matters, yet, having a certain duty to perform to religion, and to the Church, they not only have a right, but they are imperatively called on, *in the discharge of that duty*, to make use of the jurisdiction which they possess, in civil or temporal affairs, over the formation and administration of national laws, and the disposal of national property.

The State, or civil authority, has no right to dictate to its subjects, what modes of faith and worship they must adopt. Those invested with civil authority, in endeavouring to discharge the duty incumbent upon them, in regard to religion and the Church, must, of course, be guided by their own conscientious conviction of what is the right mode of faith and worship, just upon the same principle which requires every private individual, in exercising his own personal influence in the sphere in which he moves, in regulating the education of his children, or in determining his subscriptions to religious societies, to be guided by his own personal conscientious conviction of what is true in doctrine, and pure in worship. But they should not visit the mere fact of any of their subjects choosing to differ from them on those points, with any civil pains or penalties. This is not involved in the principle of religious establishments—it is not, at least, in our own times, defended by any of their intelligent supporters,—and nothing of this sort, as will be afterwards fully shewn, exists in our native land.*

See Appendix, Note F.

Having thus shortly cleared the position, that civil authorities, as such, ought to do something about religion, from the misrepresentations of its opponents, let us now very briefly advert to the special grounds on which the position may be maintained, independent of the general arguments formerly adduced in support of some union or connection between Church and State. Every man is bound, at all times, to aim at the promotion of God's glory, and the advancement of his kingdom, and to employ for these purposes, whatever influence he may possess or acquire. This is an obligation from which he cannot escape, in whatever situation he may be placed ; and to say, as our opponents do, that when he is invested with civil power, he not only is not bound, but has no right to apply *that* talent for the promotion of these ends, is a most arbitrary limitation of the supremacy of religion, and of the obligation of men to do all to the glory of God, a limitation which certainly has no warrant whatever in any thing to be learned, either from Scripture or reason, with regard to man's duty, or to the nature and objects of civil government, but which is decidedly opposed to the information derived from both these sources, upon these important subjects. We formerly proved, that the fact of civil government being an ordinance of God, imposes a special and additional obligation upon those who may administer it, when they know, from the Bible, its origin and object, to aim constantly, in administering it, at the promotion of the end for which God appointed it, viz., his own glory, and the good of

man, in the widest sense of that word. But in addition to these obligations, general and special, the consideration which brings most directly home to civil rulers, as such, the duty of doing something about religion, and directed to its promotion, is this, that the great object, about which, as all admit, they ought to be chiefly concerned, viz., the welfare of the community, materially depends upon the state of religion in the land. Every thing that affects the welfare of the nation, civil rulers are imperatively called upon, in the discharge of the duties which they owe to the community, to attend to, and to examine carefully, with the view of discovering, and doing whatever can be lawfully done for checking what is likely to be injurious, and promoting what is likely to be beneficial. That the prevalence of true religion in a country, will tend most effectually to promote the welfare of the community, even in the lowest and most restricted sense, as including merely the preservation of peace and good order, and the security of life and property, is perfectly obvious and universally admitted; and if so, then civil rulers are bound to attend to religion, to take a deep interest in its prosperity, and to do all they possibly can to promote it. Besides, the welfare of the community depends entirely upon the providence and blessing of God. We have good scriptural authority for believing that God in his providence deals with nations as nations, and even that his dealings with them, in sending them prosperity or adversity, are, in some measure, regulated by the character and conduct of

their rulers, and especially by a regard to the fact of his being nationally acknowledged and honoured. Now it is not easy to conceive how there can be any thing like a national recognition and honouring of God, unless the national laws be professedly subordinated to the principles of his word, and unless national measures be adopted for promoting the observance of his day, the proclamation of his will, and the advancement of his cause. If God's dealings with any nation are likely to be in any measure affected by these matters, and this surely will not be disputed, at least by the Evangelical Voluntaries, then all parties have a deep interest in every thing being done nationally that can be done for promoting his glory.

On both these accounts then, civil rulers, as such, are bound, from a regard to the welfare of the community, to do all they can in their official character, for promoting the interests of religion, by aiding and assisting the Church; and the community are in like manner bound, from a regard to themselves, to do all that is constitutionally competent, in order to secure, if possible, that those who rule over them be men who will rule in the fear of God, and who are willing to consecrate all their talents and influence, personal and official, to the promotion of God's glory, and the advancement of Christ's cause. Civil rulers finding it incumbent upon them to advert to religion as bearing materially upon the welfare of the community, and to do what they can to promote it; and finding also that they cannot directly

promote it by the immediate use of any thing subject to their jurisdiction, will, of course, treat with the Church on the subject. The Church and State will thus come to an understanding,—they will enter into arrangements about the part which they are to act respectively in the promotion of the common object and the State will voluntarily undertake to render every possible facility to the Church in discharging its peculiar duties. And all this implies not only some union or connection between Church and State, but also the propriety and duty of the State, or civil authority, doing something about religion directed to the promotion of its interests.

The grounds of the duty and right of civil rulers to do something about religion,—a duty, founded both on Scripture and reason, and incumbent upon them as men, as Christians, and as rulers, and a right not founded upon the possession of any jurisdiction whatever in religious matters, but resulting from the obligation of the duty, and extending to nothing more than what is needful for the right discharge of the duty,—are so strong and clear, that some of the bolder and more perspicacious Voluntaries have seen and admitted, that there is no position upon this branch of the argument which they can firmly maintain, except this, that whatever may be the duty and right of civil rulers in regard to religion, yet they *cannot*, in point of fact, do any thing for the good of religion,—that they cannot interfere in the matter at all, without *necessarily*, and *ipso facto*, injuring religion. If this position can be sub-

stantiated, it is sufficient to neutralise the arguments that have been adduced in support of the duty and right of civil rulers; but it is equally plain, that it is the only ground, with reference to this branch of the controversy, on which a Voluntary can stand, and by which the force of the arguments that have now been adduced, can be evaded. And surely the assumption of the position that civil rulers *cannot* possibly do any thing that is fitted, or likely, to promote the interests of religion, that they cannot interfere in religious matters without *necessarily* injuring religion, wears very much the appearance of a last resort,—looks very like the last expiring effort of a bold but ruined party. Not to dwell upon the extreme improbability, that God should have given us such a power of obligation to bear upon civil rulers for leading them to do something for religion, such a weight of argument to prove that they ought to make this an object of special attention and effort, if he had not only never intended them to attempt it, but had actually made it unlawful for them to do so, and impracticable to do so with beneficial results; we remark, that it is at least possible that civil rulers may have sound views of doctrine and worship, and that surely, in virtue of their controul over national laws and national wealth, they may do something that has a tendency, in perfect consistency with the nature of truth, to promote these sound views. Else, what mean the bitter complaints which we sometimes hear from Voluntaries of the unfair advantages which the Established Church enjoys in consequence of her con-

nection with the State? for while, when upon their guard, they affect that they are anxious to improve and benefit us, by raising us up to their exalted level, they not unfrequently let out that their real motive and object are to deprive us of the important advantages which they feel, to their bitter experience, that we, as an Established Church, actually enjoy. Surely it is evident, that a national recognition of Christianity, public official declarations by civil rulers, embodied in national laws, that they believe in the true religion, acknowledge its supremacy, and are determined to be guided by its principles, must be at once fitted to procure the favour of God, and thus promote the welfare of the community, and to advance the interests of true religion. It is generally admitted, that the State is bound to do something for promoting the education of the community, and unless it be contended that education is to be wholly irreligious, the State must do something about religion in this matter, must take some steps for getting sound religious instruction brought to bear upon the minds of the youth; and how this can be effected without some union or connection with the Church, it is not easy to conceive. The complete and habitual subordination of national laws, measures, and arrangements, to the authority of God's word, must have a powerful tendency at once to promote the welfare of the community, and the interests of true religion, and this is within the power, nay, comprehended in the express obligations of civil rulers. It is quite palpable to any one who has ming-

led in society, and it has of late been fully established by positive evidence, that in consequence of the toleration by law, especially in the southern part of the island, of many species of work on the Lord's day, forming open and offensive breaches of the rest of the Sabbath, many thousands of our countrymen are not only furnished with facilities, and exposed to temptations, to violate habitually the rest of the Sabbath, and to neglect divine ordinances, but are placed in circumstances in which they would have the greatest difficulties to encounter, and the most formidable obstacles to overcome, if they really wished and intended to attend the House of God. And the Legislature might do much to save them from these dangers, and thus surely take a step fitted to contribute to promote the interests of religion, by prohibiting all manner of work, of open traffic or business, on the Lord's day. He must be a bold man who, upon considering the important bearing of Sabbath observance upon the interests of religion, attending to the state of Scotland and England respectively in this point of view, and tracing the superiority of Scotland, as of necessity he must do, partly to the greater strictness of her laws in this respect, will still assert, as every one who holds the position which we are at present exposing must do, that civil rulers cannot possibly do any thing that has a tendency or fitness to promote the interests of religion, and attendance upon ordinances, even by the most judicious legislation, about the observance of the outward rest of the Sabbath.

It cannot be denied that money has a tendency or fitness, and may be employed as a mean to promote the interests of religion. Voluntaries themselves acknowledge this, as is proved by their strenuous efforts to raise money whenever they intend to engage in any scheme of Christian benevolence,—and by their frequent complaints, that they are prevented, by the want of money, from doing much that otherwise they might have done, for promoting the glory of God and the salvation of sinners. The money of the State, being given voluntarily by those to whom it belongs, has a fitness or tendency, and may be employed as a mean, to promote the interests of religion, as well as the money of individuals ; whence it follows, that civil rulers, by a judicious use of the controul which they possess over the property of the nation, may do much that has a tendency, and is likely, nay certain, (humanly speaking,) to contribute to the interests of religion and the advancement of truth and piety.

It is a fact, although Voluntaries, in their arguments and calculations, seem wholly to overlook it, that there are, at this moment, thousands and tens of thousands in our land, and especially in our large towns, living in a state of practical heathenism, destitute of churches with cheap sittings to accommodate them, and of ministers to attend to them. Whatever may be done for the salvation of these of our brethren by means of Voluntary liberality, will be done by the Established Church, most of the Voluntaries having enough, and some of them more than enough, to do with them-

selves. But many of them are daily passing into their graves, and the whole generation may have disappeared, before any thing adequate can be done, by means of the contributions of individuals, to bring them to an attendance upon divine ordinances. Now, if our civil rulers should at once come forward, and, by a grant of public money, erect churches and endow ministers for all these outcasts,—should leave the whole ecclesiastical arrangements to be regulated by the standards of the Established Church ; and, in the first instance, as there were no Christian congregations whose rights were to be regarded, should leave the appointment of the ministers to our illustrious Professor of Divinity, will any man have the boldness to say, that this act of theirs would have no tendency, and would not, in point of fact, contribute to produce the result of promoting the interests of religion and the salvation of souls ? It would not, indeed, advance the cause of Voluntaryism, it would ruin it, and ruin it for ever ; it would accelerate prodigiously that downward movement of the Voluntary cause, which has already begun, and which, we are persuaded, will go on ; but still we are not afraid to put it to the conscience of Voluntaries themselves, whether or not it be the fact, that in this way civil rulers, if they chuse, have it in their power, by a judicious disposal of national wealth, to do much, that is fitted to promote the glory of God and the prosperity of Christ's kingdom. They can do much that has a tendency, and is likely, nay certain, if judiciously regulated, to promote these objects, and if

so, then they are imperatively called upon, by their duty to God and to the community, to do it.

I have now finished the discussion of the subject intrusted to me. I think I have proved that it is lawful and proper, imperative and necessary, that there should be some union, or friendly connection, or alliance, between Church and State, between religion and civil authority; that civil rulers, as such, while they have no jurisdiction in religious matters, have something to do, and ought to do something, about religion, directed to the promotion of its interests; and that they have it in their power, if they chuse, to contribute to the accomplishment of that object. This, you will remember, is only the first step in the argument, but it is an important one. Other important principles are yet to be established, and other plausible objections to be solved, but if you have got a firm hold of the principles which I have endeavoured to prove, you will be prepared for entering more easily and cordially into the course of argument that may afterwards be submitted to you. The Voluntaries, if they had chosen, need not have gone so far, as to have denied the lawfulness of all union or connection between Church and State, and the duty and right of civil rulers to do anything about religion. They might have had many things plausible enough to say against a national endowment, and the preference of one sect to another, without adopting the extreme position which we have been combating. But since they have been foolish

enough to take up this high ground, we must encounter them there, and not only refute their principle, but also point out the practical consequences to which, when fully acted upon, it necessarily leads. For it is to this extreme position of theirs, against which we have been contending, that those fearful practical consequences attach, which must excite the indignation of every right-thinking man. If this principle which we have been combating, should be generally adopted, should gain the ascendancy in our National Councils, and be followed out to its consequences, then it would, of course, be established by law, that men, on becoming invested with civil authority, must leave their religious views behind them, renounce all right, in that character and capacity, to aim at the promotion of the glory of God, and the honour of Christ; and the effect of this would be, to exclude religious men from civil authority, (for they would not accept it upon such terms,) and to leave it wholly in the hands of atheists and infidels. Another consequence would be, that any national recognition of God or Christ must cease,—that every vestige of it must be expelled from our Legislative and Judicial Assemblies. But even this would not be all. There would no longer be any attempt made to subordinate national laws, measures, and arrangements, to the authority of God's word; or if the attempt were made, it would, of course, and very properly, be scouted. The laws for the observance of the Sabbath, would immediately be repealed, and every man would be allowed to open his shop, and his

theatre, and to ply his coach, and his steam-boat, on the day of sacred rest. All national provision for the education of the community upon religious principles, would be taken away, the provision which the Established Church at present affords, for the administration of divine ordinances, would be removed; without any certainty of a substitute; and the supplying of spiritual instruction to the many thousands of our countrymen, who are dying, and dying eternally, at our doors, would be left to the result of the tardy operation of raising pecuniary contributions from individual liberality. These are the consequences of the leading Voluntary position which we have been combating, many of them openly avowed by our opponents, and all of them clearly and logically deducible from their principle. We are sure that you will spurn from you with indignation, a doctrine that leads to such results as these, and that you will hold yourselves imperatively called upon, for your own sake, for the sake of your country and your Church, for your brethren and companions' sake, and for your children's sake, to give it your most strenuous and decided opposition, and to do all you can, in the use of appropriate means, to prevent it from gaining currency in the land, and influencing the conduct of our rulers. And when you see ministers of the gospel, and men professing godliness, coming forward, and advocating such a principle as this, and not even shrinking from such fearful consequences as have been described, the feeling of the heart of each one of you will be, "O my

soul, come not thou into their secret, and unto their assembly, O mine honour, be not thou united."

The great majority of religious men will, we doubt not, regard it as most desirable, that much more were done than at present, for nationally recognising and honouring God and Christ, for subordinating national laws and measures to the principles of his word, and applying national resources to the advancement of his cause; but upon every wish and effort directed to these objects, the principle of British Voluntaries lays an instant and decided arrest. Our civil rulers do not seem to be too anxious about promoting the glory of God and the cause of Christ; they are not, surely, neglecting their proper immediate functions, in order to attend to these matters, that Voluntaries should think it so needful to press upon them, that these are subjects with which, as rulers, they have nothing to do. The tendency is altogether the reverse, and this very circumstance renders the zealous inculcation of Voluntary principles peculiarly offensive and dangerous, and calls loudly upon every one who loves his country, to oppose them. X If you are desirous that your civil rulers should be men who fear God, and devote themselves, and all their influence, to his service,—if you wish the blessing of God to rest upon your beloved country,—if you desire to see the Sabbath honoured,—if you are anxious that the Church of your fathers should continue and prosper, and should become more extensively the instrument of instructing the community in the principles of true religion, you will set your

X

faces like a flint against the monstrous Voluntary principle which we have refuted, and you will exert yourselves to the utmost, in the use of every proper means, to cause the opposite principle, which has been established from scripture, reason, and fact, to be more generally adopted, and become more habitually influential, especially upon the conduct of our civil rulers; for it is in this way that you will do most to avert the judgments of the Almighty from our country, to preserve our Church as a blessing to the latest generations, to effect, that "glory shall dwell in our land, and that God, even our own God, shall bless us."

THE END.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A. p. 14.

A favourite position of our opponents is, that Church property is national or public property, and may therefore have its destination or application altered by the supreme civil authority. The full discussion of this point does not fall under the present Lecture, but a reference to it may explain more fully the principle laid down in the text, with regard to the power, right, or competency of the State, to dispose of national property. The principle which has been stated in the Lecture, is to be regarded as abstractly and theoretically true, but as requiring great modification in its application to practice. It seems necessary, for carrying on the government of a country, that an unlimited controul over property should be vested in those, who, according to the constitution, have the power of making its laws, and regulating its affairs; and we have, therefore, no doubt, that those who are constitutionally invested with the power of making laws, have also, not only the power, but, in a certain sense, the right of disposing of the whole property in the nation, unless the constitution of the country impose a limitation upon them in this respect. There is no such limitation imposed by the constitution of this country upon the three Estates of the Realm, and, therefore, in virtue of the general principle, they have a right or competency to controul or dispose of all the property in the nation. Of course, we not only concede the common Voluntary position, that Church property is national property, and may therefore be competently either applied or misapplied by those who are invested with supreme civil authority; but we assert, that the whole property which the nation contains stands in the same predicament. Any British subject is entitled to form an estimate of the mode in which property is actually arranged, to make known his opinion upon the matter, and to exert his constitutional influence in endeavouring to effect an arrangement in accordance with his conviction of what is right. Voluntaries are fully entitled to go, if they chuse, to the supreme civil authorities, and ask them to confiscate the property of the Established Church, and apply it to

pay the national debt, urging that it is competent, just, and expedient to do so, and that it would be beneficial, both to the Church and the State. And in following them there, to maintain the cause and interests of the Church, we would not deny the competency of the application, the right of the State to take it up and consider it, but we would set ourselves to prove, that it would not be right, just, or expedient for them to resolve on confiscating the property of the Church, and we would prove this by showing, that the property of the Church has been given for the purpose of promoting an important national object, to which, for the sake of the nation, the rulers are called upon to attend,—an object, the promotion of which, comes fairly and fully within their sphere, and which they can and must do something to effect ; that the property which the Church possesses, is really and in fact available, to a considerable extent, for promoting the important national object intended by it, and contributes more, in its present application, to the welfare of the community, than in any other that could be proposed, or than any other equal portion of property in the nation, whether possessed by individuals or corporations. And we would also urge, in perfect consistency with our general admission of the right or competency of the supreme civil authority to entertain the application and decide upon it, that the confiscation of Ecclesiastical property would sanction a dangerous principle, introduce a bad precedent, unsettle the foundations of all property, and thus disturb the peace and good order of the community.

The proof of these positions, and they could be easily proved, would show the civil rulers, that it would be a violation of their duty to God and the community, as well as most inexpedient and dangerous, if they were to exercise their power or right to dispose of national wealth in the way of confiscating Ecclesiastical property.

In like manner, whatever other proposals might be made to the Legislature to confiscate and apply to national purposes, any portion of the property of any particular class of individuals or corporations, we would, in perfect consistency with our general principle, oppose them, upon the ground, that they would involve positive injustice to the persons more immediately concerned, as obliging them to contribute to general national purposes, more than in proportion to their means ; that they would sanction a most dangerous principle, which might afterwards be carried to a much greater length ; and that they would unsettle the foundations, and destroy the security, of all property, and thus defeat one great end for which civil government was instituted, and civil governors appointed.

It is thus, we trust, made apparent, that the great principle laid down in the Lecture, as to the power, and even, in a certain sense, the right, of the supreme civil authority to dispose of all the property in the nation ; or, in other words, as to the competency of the Legislature to entertain, investigate, and decide upon every proposal whatever which affects property, while true in itself, and of some importance, as serving to elucidate some parts of the controversy with the enemies of Establishments, is not in the least inconsistent with the full admission of the sacredness of the rights of property, of the injustice, inexpediency, and moral unlawfulness of civil rulers doing any thing unfair or unequitable in regard to any portion of the property subject to their controul, or any thing which, in its tendency or results, may be fitted to diminish the stability of property in general, the security with which all proprietors may rest on the certainty of being treated with justice and equity.

NOTE B. p. 28.

There is nothing which the Voluntaries employ more frequently, or with more effect, against Religious Establishments, than the idea of compulsion, alledged to be involved in the principles on which they rest. The mere word tells upon the minds of many unthinking people ; and circumstances occasionally occur which, by the help of a little distortion, or misrepresentation, confirm them in the notion, that compulsion, as implying something offensive and unwarrantable, really attaches to establishments. But a slight explanation will solve this, the most plausible perhaps of all their objections to our cause. It is conceded, that compulsion in pecuniary matters, that is, the forcible abstraction of property by those to whom it does not truly belong, and against the will of the real proprietor, is unjust and unwarrantable, whether practised by individuals or by corporations, by churches or by civil societies, and whether the property so abstracted is to be devoted to secular or ecclesiastical purposes. Voluntaries cannot ask us to admit more than this, and it will require more ingenuity than they have yet discovered, to turn this admission against establishments. Our opponents, in adverting to this subject, always speak as if Religious Establishments implied the direct and immediate application of compulsion and force to the inculcation of truth, and the promotion of religion,—as if force and compulsion were directly brought to bear upon a man as a proper mean for leading him to entertain certain opinions, and adopt a certain mode of acting. We have no doubt that many of the more ignor-

ant Voluntaries believe that something of this kind is practised by Established Churches, and the statements of some of their orators are well fitted to produce such an impression. But surely the orators must know well, that any thing fitted to give such an impression, is a misrepresentation and a calumny. They cannot but be aware, that the direct and immediate application of compulsion, of force, or coercion, as a mean of inculcating truth and promoting religion, is not implied in an Ecclesiastical Establishment, is not exhibited in connection with any of the establishments of this country, and is not advocated by any of their defenders. Compulsion, that is, the lawful exercise of coercive power, is occasionally exhibited in connection with establishments; but it is employed solely for the purpose of raising money,—a purpose for which it is well fitted, which, in certain circumstances, cannot be accomplished without it; and for effecting which, it is quite lawful to have recourse to the compulsory exercise of civil authority when the person to whom the money really belongs cannot otherwise procure it, and when the money so procured is intended to be devoted to a purpose, to which money may be lawfully applied, Now these considerations fully warrant the compulsory exercise of civil power sometimes exhibited in connection with Religious Establishments. The money to be raised in these cases, is truly and legally the property of those who have recourse to the ordinary provisions of law, when, through the improper conduct of others, they cannot get it in any other way. And it is intended, when raised, to be applied to an object good and important in itself, and which cannot be effected in any other way than by money, viz., the support of ministers and churches. If churches and ministers are to be supported, money must be procured; every thing connected with money is properly and fully subject to the jurisdiction of the civil authority; and every thing affecting the possession and application of money, must be regulated by the laws of the land, properly administered and fairly executed. Voluntaries must admit, that the ministers of an Endowed Church have the same legal right to their stipends as to any other property which they may have acquired by inheritance or bequest. The property, in the one case, is guarded by all the security which law can give, and in the other, it rests upon no better foundation. In both cases equally, the abstraction of any portion, either of the inheritance or of the stipend, from the minister, is unjust and illegal, implying that he is injured in violation of law, and that the other party, of course is guilty. When such a case occurs, in a well regulated society, the proper remedy is the compulsory exercise of civil authority. It is a remedy which it is quite lawful for any proprietor to resort to when his property is illegally taken from

him. And if ministers, or any other proprietors, were to neglect to apply this remedy in all those cases in which it was needed, and for which it was fitted and intended, it would tend to introduce anarchy and confusion.

Suppose that a member of a dissenting church were to bequeath to the managers, for behoof of the congregation, a bond for L.100; that the managers resolve on rebuilding and enlarging the place of worship; that in order to defray the expense, they call up the L.100 upon bond that had been bequeathed to them; and that the granter of the bond, from a strong aversion that money should pass from his pocket to be applied in building a dissenting chapel, or from any other motive, should refuse to pay it, would the managers scruple to carry the matter into a court of law, and to bring, if needful, the compulsory exercise of civil authority to bear upon it? Would any one blame them for such an exercise of compulsion in order to raise money for rebuilding their church, or scruple to denounce the granter of the bond as a knave for refusing to give to others what truly belongs to them, and thereby rendering a law-suit and compulsion necessary? and if he were to attempt to defend, not, of course, the legality, but, perhaps, the morality of his conduct, by alledging that his conscience would not allow him to give money, which he knew was to be employed in promoting a religion which he abhorred, would not every one treat this as a mere pretence, and see and decide at once, that the only thing in the matter which his conscience had to do, was to constrain him to pay a just and lawful debt? Now this case illustrates the compulsion alledged to be involved in Church Establishments. The property of the Church was originally given to it as voluntarily, and, in all respects, as justly and fully as the bond was given to the managers. It then, of course, became their property, with all the sanctions and securities with which, by law, property is guarded. If, while the law continues unchanged, an attempt is made to divert any portion of this property from its lawful owners, there is, of course, at once injustice and illegality on the part of him who makes it. A thing is attempted, the toleration of which is inconsistent with the authority of law, the security of property, and the good order of the community; and even if those who were more immediately injured should be willing to bear the loss, yet it would be the imperative duty of the Executive, for the sake of the community, to step in and insist that the law should take its course.

When all the members of the community are doing justly, giving to all their due, and obeying the laws, then no compulsion will ever be exhibited in connection with an Established Church.

Compulsion, that is, the proper exercise of civil authority suitable to the circumstances, appears only when some person attempts to violate the law by withholding, or abstracting the property of the Church; and it appears then, just because the welfare of the community imperatively requires that every attempt to violate the law, by interfering with property, should be promptly and decidedly checked. The law was made for the lawless and disobedient, and never, probably, was this position more fully illustrated than by those applications of law which have laid the foundation of the charge of compulsion, as attaching to Ecclesiastical Establishments. There is no room, or scope, for compulsion, except where there is first a dishonest purpose and a dishonest action; and surely there is no great occasion for astonishment or lamentation, that where there is an illegal attempt to interfere with the property of others, the law should interpose to prevent it; and there is no great reason why honest men should sympathize very deeply with those who require the compulsory exercise of civil authority to be applied to them, before they will part with what does not belong to them, but is truly the property of another. Voluntaries, in general, with the exception of those who are apparently verging towards Quaker views with regard to the payment of taxes, will admit, that in the cases on which they are so fond of dwelling, as illustrating the compulsion connected with Religious Establishments, those whose refusal to pay, when it was in their power to have paid, rendered compulsion needful, were to blame, were doing wrong, were acting unwarrantably and unjustly. All but Quakers will acknowledge that their duty in the circumstances,—that which was incumbent upon them at once by the law of God and of man, was to have paid, and that in not paying, their conduct was deserving of censure, and might equitably expose them to suffering. This being the case, it is undeniable, that the compulsion, with all its painful accompaniments and consequences, is to be ascribed solely to the natural operation of a law, which ought to be obeyed, upon the minds of lawless and dishonest men, in other words, to their misconduct and depravity, that it is the necessary result, and not more than the well merited punishment of their unjust and illegal procedure. It is rather hard, that this charge of compulsion, so often brought against the Established Church, should rest *solely* upon the unjust and illegal conduct of its enemies, and that, whenever they chuse, by acting unjustly, to render necessary the application of laws, made for the lawless and disobedient, they should be able to produce a state of things which excites the indignation of unthinking people, not against those who are the true authors and causes of it, but against a different and innocent party. And it

is very strange, that those enemies of the Church, who have too much regard to principle or to decency, to expose themselves to the compulsory exercise of civil authority, by withholding the property of the Church, and who, of course, are bound by their principles to condemn every such attempt as unjust and improper, should sympathise so much with those who are guilty of it, and who are therefore responsible for all its consequences, and should be at so little pains to conceal their rejoicing in the iniquity of their less scrupulous associates.

It is, indeed, possible, that, by the assiduous exertions of unprincipled men, a condition of things may be produced, in which it would be more expedient to repeal the law securing the stability of Ecclesiastical property than to enforce it; but this should not affect our estimate of the morality of those whose improper conduct while the law exists, necessitates and, therefore, justifies compulsion, and should not render us less strenuous in endeavouring to frustrate the plans of those who are labouring to bring about such a catastrophe.

The question as to whether or not the law securing Ecclesiastical property should be continued or repealed, is quite different from this, and must be decided upon different grounds. In this note, we have merely taken for granted what none but Quakers deny, that, in the meantime, that law ought to be obeyed, and cannot be violated without sin; and upon the ground of this admission, we have proved that the charge of compulsion, as supposed necessarily to attach to an Endowed Church, rests upon a complete misrepresentation of the whole matter; that when the authority of law is called in to defend Ecclesiastical property from invasion, this does not involve any thing whatever inconsistent with justice, equity, or humanity, and that the necessity of having recourse to coercion, arises solely from the misconduct and dishonesty, not of him who has recourse to it, but of him against whom it is directed.

NOTE C. p. 30.

It is quite possible that the King and the whole members of both Houses of Parliament, should be true Christians, men really devoted to God's service, and feeling their obligations to promote the interests of Christ's Kingdom. It is the duty of every friend of his country to desire and pray, and, in so far as is competent and practicable, to strive, that this may actually be the case. The friends of the Church especially, should earnestly desire such a condition of things to be brought about, for we are firmly persuaded that nothing would more effectually contribute to the stability and prosperity of an Established Church than the prevalence of genuine Christianity in the hearts of the rulers of the

nation. If the whole members of both Houses of Parliament were really men who feared God and loved Jesus Christ, who felt their obligations to promote God's glory, and to take his word as the standard of their conduct, and were to proceed, after prayer for heavenly wisdom, to consider what they ought to do with regard to religion, a few of them, indeed, might be perverted by Voluntary views, but we hold it to be morally impossible that the result of their deliberations could be any thing else than this, a conviction, that it was imperatively incumbent upon them to regulate national laws and measures by the authority of God's word, in so far as it applied, to make enactments for securing the outward rest of the Sabbath, and removing the obstacles which might prevent any portion of the community from attending divine ordinances, to provide for the education of the community, upon religious principles, and, of course, under ecclesiastical superintendence, and to apply the public resources, so far as might be needful, for securing churches and ministers to the whole population. Difficulties and differences of opinion there might be as to the precise modes in which these objects were to be accomplished,—difficulties arising at once from the nature of the subject, and the peculiar circumstances of the country; but we have no doubt that the general obligation to aim at the promotion of these objects, would be acknowledged, and something resolved upon for effecting them, by an overwhelming majority.

Voluntaries, in the views which they have avowed, have left themselves full latitude for exerting their political influence in behalf of individuals, without any regard to their religious profession or character, and many of them have exhibited unequivocal symptoms of a desire to avail themselves of this latitude in all its extent; from all which, the inference is neither very far-fetched, nor very uncharitable, that some of them have a pretty distinct consciousness, that the cause of Voluntaryism is not likely to be promoted by the spread of true religion among the members of the House of Lords, or by the introduction of pious men into the House of Commons.

NOTE D. p. 32.

It is a curious illustration of extremes meeting, that Erastianism and Cameronianism,* should both have been founded

* The Author is now convinced, that in this passage he has misstated the views of the highly respectable body who are familiarly known by the name of Cameronians. They hold peculiar opinions with regard to civil government, as connected with Christianity, but they are most decided supporters of the principle of National Establishments of Religion; and, it is believed, would cordially assent to most, if not all, of the statements, contained in this note, with regard to Christ's supremacy, and its bearing upon the obligations of civil rulers.

upon the position, that civil government is derived from Christ, as Mediator, and that civil governors hold of and under him in that capacity, a doctrine which has no foundation in the Word of God, or in the Standards of our Church, and which is certainly not implied in the argument to which this note refers, although an allegation to that effect is the common Voluntary mode of answering it.

It does not make any *essential* difference, either in the nature or strength of the argument, to found it upon the supremacy of Christ, in place of resting it upon the supremacy of God; because there is nothing *essentially* different between the nature and object of the dominion which Christ exercises as Mediator, and that which he is entitled to exercise as God. But since Christ has been, in point of fact, as Mediator, invested with the government of the world, and made Head over all things, it is, of course, the duty of all who know this, to acknowledge him as such, and to apply to him, as Mediator, the principles which otherwise they would have applied to God. When a man comes to understand and believe that Christ now actually administers God's providence over the world, he is, of course, called upon, as the proper practical application of this truth, to put Christ, as it were, in the place of God, when endeavouring to discharge the great duty of acknowledging, in all his ways, the Disposer of all events. And, in like manner, while civil government is undoubtedly founded upon natural principles, and should be regulated mainly by a regard to the relation in which men and nations stand to God, as the great moral governor of the world; it is also true, and in perfect consistency with this position, that when civil governors come to know the fact, that Christ, as Mediator, is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, they must, as it were, transfer their allegiance to him, in other words, seeing now, that the promotion of God's glory, which, without any knowledge about Christ, they were bound to aim at as their ultimate object, is identical with the advancement of the cause of Christ upon earth, and that Christ has the same claim upon them, to constrain them to promote the ends of his exaltation, as God has to induce them to aim at the promotion of his ends in the creation and preservation of the world, they will, of course, acknowledge it to be incumbent upon them to do what they can, to embrace whatever opportunities their official station, influence, and authority may afford them, with the view of honouring Christ, promoting the prosperity and extension of his Church, and thus contributing to the great end, on account of which he humbled himself, and for the attainment of which he has been raised to the Throne of the Universe.

The argument, then, in favour of some union between Church and State, derived from Christ's supremacy, does not imply that civil government is derived from him as Mediator, or that dominion is founded on grace, doctrines which are both false. It rests upon these plain grounds, that, in point of fact, all civil governors hold their offices by his appointment or permission; that he has a right to regulate or direct them in the discharge of all their duties, and in the exercise of all their authority; that he has appointed or permitted them to attain to the possession of civil power, in order that in some way or another, whether conscious of it or not, they may be instrumental in promoting the interests of his Church or Kingdom; and that therefore, whenever, from the study of the Scriptures, they come to be aware of their relation and obligations to him, they are imperatively called upon, consciously and intelligently, to do every thing which the possession of civil power enables them to do, for contributing to the prosperity and extension of his Church.

These positions are surely well-founded; and if so, then, in the doctrine of Christ's supremacy, there is ample ground for the assertion, that if civil rulers feel and act aright towards him, there will certainly be a union, or friendly connection, between Church and State.

NOTE E. p. 38.

The common reply of Voluntaries, to the argument in favour of some union between religion and civil authority, derived from the light of nature, as evinced by the practice of almost all nations, is to this effect, that we know nothing about Christianity, except from the Sacred Scriptures,—that the light of nature, and the practice of heathen nations, do not teach any thing about Christianity, and, of course, do not teach that it ought to be Established. Now, in answer to this reply, we remark, *1st*, That though the light of nature teaches nothing about Christianity, it may, and does teach something about religion,—that what is true of religion is true of Christianity,—that in the mind of every true Christian, religion is just Christianity,—and that whatever truth he may ascertain from any competent source about the former, he is fully warranted in applying to the latter.

2d, The appeal is not made to the light of nature, and the practice of nations, in order to ascertain any thing directly about religion and Christianity, but in order to assist in ascertaining *the duties and obligations of civil rulers*, a subject to be regulated mainly by natural principles, and in regard to which, therefore, it is quite reasonable to expect, that the light of nature should

afford us some direction. The appeal, consequently, to the light of nature in this matter, is quite competent and reasonable, and all the information which can be obtained from that source, is decidedly in favour of a union, or friendly connection, between religion and civil authority, and of the right and duty of civil rulers, as such, to do something for promoting the interests of religion among their subjects.

NOTE F. p. 44.

At every step in this painful controversy, we are called upon to expose gross misrepresentations on the part of our opponents; but there is probably not one more gross than their constant allegation, without either proof or plausibility, that an admission of the right of civil rulers to exercise jurisdiction, and to dictate to their subjects, in religious matters, is necessarily involved in the principle of National Establishments. The defenders of Church Establishments disclaim the ascription of any such jurisdiction or right to civil rulers, and defy their opponents to prove, that it is involved in any principle which they maintain. All that churchmen, in defending the general idea of union between Church and State, are bound to maintain, is, that there is nothing about the Church or the State to preclude an alliance, or friendly connection, between them, but much to warrant and facilitate it; and that civil rulers, as such, can, and should, do something for promoting the interests of religion. There is nothing here that even appears to countenance the ascription to civil rulers, of a jurisdiction or right to dictate in religious matters. And even when the State endows the Church, all that must be maintained in defending that act of the State, is, that civil rulers have jurisdiction over national wealth, that money may be employed as a mean of promoting the interests of religion, that civil rulers, as well as private individuals, in applying money professedly for religious purposes, are bound, by a great and unchangeable principle of moral rectitude, to be guided by their own conscientious conviction of what is the true religion, and of what is the purest form of that religion, and that they must strive to secure to all their subjects, who may not be unwilling to receive it, an opportunity of being instructed, in what they, the rulers, reckon right views of divine truth; while, of course, they should make no attempt to force this instruction upon them, or to prevent them from providing what they, the subjects, reckon sounder instruction, for themselves. This is all

which the defenders of the principle of Endowments need to maintain, and it affords not a shadow of a ground for the common calumny, that National Establishments imply an admission of a right in civil rulers to exercise jurisdiction, or to dictate to their subjects, in religious matters. Whenever civil rulers assume a jurisdiction or right to dictate, in religious matters, or go beyond what the fair application of the principles that have just been stated, warrants, we condemn them as decidedly as our opponents ; but at present, in discussing abstract principles, we must not allow our judgments to be warped, by dwelling upon particular cases of abuse.

Ouropponents are in the habit of asserting, that the Confession of Faith ascribes to civil rulers, jurisdiction, and a right to dictate, in religious matters, and that, therefore, a minister of the Church of Scotland, in denying this, is acting inconsistently. This is not an occasion for shewing fully, how groundless this accusation is, and we must, therefore, content ourselves at present, with merely asserting, in the words of the Testimony of the Associate Synod of Original Seceders, (p. 65,) “ That whatever sense may be imposed upon some expressions in it, taken by themselves, yet, upon a fair and candid interpretation of the whole doctrine which it lays down upon the subject, the Westminster Confession will not be found justly chargeable with countenancing persecution for conscience sake, with subjecting matters purely religious to the cognizance of the civil magistrate, or with allowing him a supremacy over the Church, or any power in it.”

We would only remark farther, that we are neither surprised nor concerned at this charge of inconsistency, upon the ground of denying to civil rulers, jurisdiction, properly so called, and a right to dictate to their subjects, in religious matters, while yet we receive the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith, when we remember, that the United Secession Synod, in their Testimony, (p. 59,) plainly enough insinuate the same charge, with reference to the same subject, and upon substantially the same grounds, against *the Founders of the Secession.*

LECTURE II.

THE LAWFULNESS OF THE CHURCH ACCEPTING AN ENDOWMENT FROM THE STATE, &c.

I MUST crave your permission to enter on my subject somewhat abruptly, without giving expression to those respectful and kindly feelings with which I regard this numerous assembly of my friends and fellow-citizens. For, although I shall not detain you very long, I am somewhat apprehensive, lest both your patience and my own strength may fail me before I shall have accomplished the object which—as my appearance here this evening sufficiently indicates—I have most deeply at heart.

To explain that object, then, in a few words, let me just remark, that one Lecture has already been delivered, as introductory to discussions on the whole subject of this controversy. My present Lecture is also introductory, but with this important distinction, that it is not introductory to discussions on the whole subject, but specially introductory to discussions on

one, and the chief department,—the question of Endowments. I am not appointed to argue for the expediency, the duty, or the desirableness of endowments; but an objection having been taken, to the entertaining upon that question any arguments at all,—it being objected by our opponents, in bar of all arguments, that they hold in their hands, the distinct decisive condemnation of our scheme by Christ and his apostles, the first thing to be done is to dispose of that objection. They produce, as it were, an authoritative scripture interdict, to supercede all argumentative discussions on the matter. They protest, in Christ's name, that if we argue the question, we deny his authority, and proceed in the face of his recorded decision. The first thing to be done, therefore, by Christian controversialists, is to dispose of this spurious interdict; not to argue forthwith the question of endowments, but simply to shew that it is open for argument,—that the discussion is not foreclosed, as our opponents imagine, and that, without the least compromise of reverence for Christ, as our common Lord, you can admit my friends coming after me, to a fair and impartial hearing.

I trust it is distinctly understood, therefore, that my object is not to set forth our array of arguments for an endowment to the clergy; but leaving that to others, who are much fitter to do so, my object is simply to examine, as it were, the deed of interdict,—to investigate, as it were, the instrument which our opponents set forth as containing Christ's decision against us, and

to shew, from an examination of it, clause by clause, that while the words, indeed, are Christ's, they have mistaken the meaning of them,—the alleged meaning is their own.

I. This much being premised, I proceed to the investigation, and I find that these clauses are just two, upon which I shall remark successively. The first is in these words, which are faithfully transcribed from the xviiith chapter of St. John's Gospel, at the 36th verse, where we are told that Jesus answered Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world." Our opponents assert, that these words are so decisive against our scheme of endowments, that the question need not be argued on. "We won't argue with you," say they, "upon the question, after this. We won't hear you after this. The question is already settled by the grand Arbiter of all controversies. We appeal from disquisitions to the Law and to the Testimony; and pointing to this judgment of the great Head of the Church, we tell you that we hold by it, and pronounce your existing practice indefensible, and a crime." This is their assertion, by way, you will observe, of at once, and most religiously, cutting short the controversy. But when I ask them, in quite a friendly way, to shew me how this testimony of Holy Writ happens to be so decisive of the whole question, that really there is no room for argument at all—when I ask them to shew this, because, honestly, I cannot see how our blessed Lord's saying in this passage, "My kingdom is not of

this world," refers, even in the least degree, to the question in dispute, I find that it requires from them, very much more disputatious argument to explain the text in their own way, than would have been required for the discussion of the whole subject, had they let that text alone; and that this summary appeal to what they call the Law, is, in reality, nothing else than a very round-about sort of reference to their own understanding.

To make this quite plain, and expose the injustice of it,—though most unintentional, I am sure, is any such injustice on the part of hundreds of excellent persons who have lost themselves in the controversy:—Suppose any of yourselves apprehended for high treason, and they load you with irons, and will drag you before the Lords, because, as they allege, you actually make a livelihood by certain treasonable practices. Amazed, as well you may, you argue, and wish to prove the perfect innocence of your whole life, as they hurry you along the streets. But no, say your accusers, it is a case of clear law, and not for argument at all; and when we have gotten you up to the court-house, we shall put our finger on such a chapter, and such a verse of the Statute-Book, as shall convict you at once, as clearly as if you were marked with a branding-iron. And so you go to the court-house, but when that boasted passage is read out in open court,—that passage which was to be as clear in its own light as the sun in a summer's day, one clever advocate gets up, and he speaks like a man resolved never really to

have an end ; and another advocate gets up, still cleverer than he ; and half the bar are on their legs to prove, what ? and in what way ? why, to prove, that though the passage says nothing at all about such practices as yours, yet, granting them only certain abstract assumptions of their own, which everybody but lawyers themselves denies, and everybody but lawyers themselves detests, and everybody but lawyers themselves is quite ready to confute by argument ; granting them all this, which is granting the whole question, then, no doubt, they will prove, to your entire satisfaction, that that passage of the Statute-Book may be twisted to bear upon you. But is it not very clear, my friends, that if convicted in that way, you are not convicted by the law, but by the logic, or rather the logomachy of the lawyers ; and that while, nominally, they transferred the question to the decision of the Statute-Book, they did, in effect, transfer the question to the decision of their own will. Now, this is precisely the kind of justice which the Church of this Christian land meets with in this controversy. The simple saying of our Lord, “ My kingdom is not of this world,” is nominally appealed to, to convict her of high treason against her King and her Saviour ; to convict her as a prostitute partaker of the sins of the Mystic Babylon ; and, we are told, that if tried by this simple verse, she will be seen to have the mark of the very beast upon her forehead. But to fasten the charge upon her, the most talented of her accusers must take occasion, from this text, to launch forthwith

into a perfect ocean of controversy. She is not tried by these plain words of Christ, but by the subtleties which it affords these, her most ingenious adversaries, an opportunity to display. And while they pledged themselves to dispense with argument, and decide the case by appeal to the Law and to the Testimony, I find that they have only dispensed with the Church's arguments, to gain an audience for their own.

1. To prove what I say to every plain man's understanding,—to prove that this much boasted passage has nought to do with the controversy, so that it can only be made a handle of, let us state briefly the occasion on which it was delivered, and the whole amount of information contained in it, for the instruction of the Church. It is of main importance to notice, that these words were not addressed as a warning to the Church, nor as a warning to any one. They were not spoken to excite a godly fear and jealousy in the mind of any person whatever, but quite the reverse; they were spoken in order to prevent, or to pacify a mere groundless alarm. Neither Pilate nor Cæsar knew, that when the people would have taken our Lord by force, to have made him king of Judea, he withdrew from the midst of them; and that when Satan tempted him with the temporal possession and sovereignty of the whole universal earth, he stood true to his Father's purpose, and his people's salvation. Neither Pilate nor Cæsar knew this, and lest, in their ignorance, they should be persuaded to take alarm from the urgency of the chief priests and scribes, who, backed by the

outcries and execrations of an infuriated populace, represented Christ as a designing rival to the kingly power in that land, our blessed Lord anticipates that jealousy, and prevents it, or puts it down, by this explicit assertion, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews."

Now, who does not see that our Lord here asserts nothing at all positively respecting the nature or attributes of his kingdom. He leaves the nature of his kingdom perfectly in the dark. Without entering in the least upon explanations of what it is, he just tells us what it is not; and even as respects that negative, he just touches on this one particular, its not being a temporal monarchy, from which the dynasty of the Cæsars had any thing to dread. We all know, and I trust we can all prove, from other passages of Scripture, many properties of that kingdom, by the enumeration of which I could magnify it immeasurably, as perfectly an unearthly thing. I could prove from other passages, for example, that its objects are all spiritual—that its earthly subjects are all saints—that the whole power of it is within you—that its law is the law of love—that it is eternal in its duration—that its throne is in the heavens, and that He who sitteth thereon hath all dominion committed to him both in heaven and on earth. All these properties of the kingdom which is here spoken of, I can readily prove from other sayings of Christ, but not one of these can I prove from this

saying. You see yourselves, that were you reasoning upon these points against heretical opinions, to convince any intelligent person, you never could produce this text in aid of your argument, as if it contained Christ's own deliverance upon any, even of these incontrovertible questions of orthodoxy; because, desirous as he was by this declaration, merely to prevent the jealousy of the king, he says nothing upon these points at all, and much less does he say any thing here about the mode of paying the clergy. He never touches that question here. It is plain that he never looks at it. And, therefore, however possible it may be for the most ingenious of our opponents, to shew, upon their own principles, that a Voluntary church, as it is called, is more glaringly distinct from an earthly kingdom, than is an Endowed one, they cannot prove what they promised when they quoted this text as a law, namely, that that kind of distinction or separation between the two kingdoms, is required by the Saviour. Granting that some such financial arrangement as theirs is would widen the difference, and place the spiritual and the temporal kingdoms more entirely asunder, they cannot shew what they undertook to shew, when they threatened us with a law, namely, that Christ here commands that kind of difference to be instituted. It is plainly nothing else than their own favourite invention, for making the difference more glaring. But if that is what is wanted, I can fall upon fifty other inventions in a moment, to make it fifty times more glaring still; and I hope that, admitting their own inventions, they

will also make room for mine, though neither they nor I may wish them to be acted on. It would make the difference between the spiritual and the temporal kingdoms more glaring, for instance, if the ministers and various office-bearers of Christ's kingdom, like their Master, had not where to lay their heads ; or if there were no ministers, no office-bearers, no officials at all. There is, in fact, no end to inventions of outrageous extravagance ; and if our opponents can reason plausibly upon their own principles for a difference upon the two modes of payment, I pledge myself to reason any day from the very same principles as plausibly for any difference they please. Our blessed Lord in this passage gives his sanction to none of them. The only difference he refers to being, that whereas the kings of the earth hold each some earthly territory and prerogative, his kingdom is of a kind that does not meditate their dethronement. And, therefore, for any ministers of religion to allege this passage as Christ's solemn decision against our taking help from the State, can serve no other purpose, than to put forth the result of their own reasonings, under the assumed sanction of our Master's name, to mystify and to frighten us.

2. But though I have gone into all this scripture argument for the refutation of our opponents, and the fuller satisfaction of such of the Christian people as may have been misled by the controversy, I shall now endeavour to shew you that there is another much shorter and simpler plan for refuting our opponents here ; and if any of you has failed to follow me through

that critical exposition which I have just now concluded, I am sure that now at least you will go along with me. After shewing, as I have done, that the declaration, "My kingdom is not of this world," has no reference whatever to any questions about money, I come now, for the sake of argument, to admit, that it has. Giving in to all that I have hitherto been contending against, as for my very life, I now say to our opponents, I agree to their own terms. And, because they will have it so, I agree to suppose along with them, that our Lord here ordains that his kingdom or Church shall not accept of any pay from the State. Very well—this being all clearly and amicably settled, and we being bound on both sides to submit and to hold to this, as the decision of our common Lord, I need scarcely add, that we are all agreed as to what the kingdom or Church of Christ really is, for, upon that point there never was, among professing Christians, the least shadow of dispute. We all know, and we all maintain, whether we be Voluntary men or Establishment men, that the kingdom or Church of Christ, is the whole community of believers, embracing laity as well as clergy. For, what would you think of us! Could you tolerate our presumption did we say that we, the clergy, are Christ's kingdom to the exclusion of yourselves! And so then, we being all agreed that this which we all call the kingdom or Church of Christ, can take no pay from the State, I go, first of all, to the judges, and Crown-officers, and civil functionaries of the land; and then I step away to the military, and

to every man in the three kingdoms, that professes to belong to the kingdom or Church, which is here spoken of—the great community of believers: I go with this scripture interdict, furnished me by the Voluntaries, and I tell one and all of these lay and Right Honourable gentlemen, receiving pay from the State, that though we, Divines, as all the world knows, have unhappily had our controversies, yet about this much we are all agreed, that they professing to belong to the kingdom or Church of Christ, the great community of believers, may live upon charity, or they may live as they can best contrive, and we shall be exceedingly happy, that they make themselves comfortable; but this one thing is ruled, that professing to belong to Christ's kingdom, they dare not accept of subsistence money from the State. Our opponents themselves are by no means inclined for so clean a sweep of the functionaries. But how can they prevent it, if Christ speaking so very plainly as he does of his kingdom or Church—the whole community of believers, interdicts that whole community from receiving pay from the State. To prevent this, they just take upon them to change the first and most important term in the whole statement. And after all that they have said so solemnly and so well, about the worth of Christ's words, and the sacred duty of abiding by Christ's high arbitration, they must just chuse to understand that he is not speaking of the kingdom or Church here—the whole community of believers, he is only speaking of the clergy. Now, they perfectly know,

that speaking plainly as he does of his entire kingdom or Church, he is not speaking of the clergy, any more than of the laity, for, by the universal interpretation of all Christendom, both together are the kingdom or Church here spoken of. They perfectly know this, and they must be perfectly conscious so soon as we point it out, that to bring our Lord's statement to bear upon us, they have taken out the word "kingdom" or Church, which has one large comprehensive meaning of its own, and they have put in the place of it the word *clergy*, which has distinctly another meaning. But there are not a few Christian men among these same controversialists, who are not in the least aware of having so tampered with the text, until it is pointed out to them. And, therefore, although for the sake of truth, I cannot withhold the following brief illustration, I must preface it by declaring, that I hold such of my opponents as I am speaking of, as guiltless as myself of all intentional deception, while yet looking at the way in which this text has been managed, I can liken it to nothing so properly as the dexterous feat of a juggler. After solemn preface and preamble about the sterling worth of Christ's words, and their sterling preciousness as the gold, they present me with this text, and tell me to hold by it, for it is every thing in the controversy; and they want not the words of man, they want the words of their Saviour. But no sooner do I begin to look at what this is they have really given me, with all these so very Christian injunctions to hold by, than I see that the chiefest

word of their Saviour has been shifted away, and that there is left in the place of it a senseless word of their own. And just so have I seen a juggler deposit faithfully in the palm of some one of his admiring visitors, a guinea of pure gold, and after a prodigious descant upon the sterling worth of a gold guinea, fresh shining from the Mint, with the king's head and inscription on it,—laying strictest injunctions on the good simple man all the while, to hold it firmly in his fist, because it is a gold guinea, and he never shall see its like again, yet, when the man's hand is examined by the company, behold the guinea has flown away, and there is something left in the place of it, quite as worthless as a button without an eye, or as the veriest brass farthing.

You perceive, then, I trust, from all that I have said, that there are just two ways of disposing of this text, and our opponents may make their own free choice of either of them. In the *first* place, let them either admit what I have proved by fair exposition, that these words of our Lord, "My kingdom is not of this world," say nothing whatever upon the matter in dispute. Or, in the *second* place, if they still insist upon making use of the passage, let them use it faithfully as it stands. Let them apply their alleged doctrine to the kingdom, the entire kingdom or church, which is here so plainly spoken of, and not take it upon themselves, without the least shadow of a warrant, to apply it merely to the clergy. For since they never will themselves even admit, that we, the ecclesiastics, constitute separately

and alone the kingdom or church of Jesus Christ in reality, we decline, on all occasions, the mere honour of the name ; and most of all are we loath to be honoured nominally in that fashion, when we perceive very plainly that it would just aid destructives, in their purpose to rob the poor of the means of religious ordinances, and to rob ourselves of a decent maintenance.

3. But there are many others concerned in this controversy besides mere controversialists. There is a large class of persons deceived by it who never mingle in controversy, and for whom I have felt most deeply, because I observe how they are biassed and misled by feelings which do them the greatest honour, and fit them in many respects to be an example to all of us. I think that by this time I must have convinced even these people of what should be quite enough, namely, that these words of their Saviour say at least nothing against us, and cannot be used in the controversy with the rightful sanction of his name. And yet because of their known fondness for sentiment, I see plainly the danger of their falling in with the notion, that though the plain sense of the passage says indeed nothing against us, yet they will be only acting in accordance with what they call *the spirit* of it, if they go along with the Voluntaries, and use the passage as a law. Because this is only their own opinion, however, or, to speak more properly, their own floating notion of what they call *the spirit* of a passage,—a term by the way, which, as employed by these good people, neither

I nor anybody else, so far as I know, was ever able to define—because, I say, this is merely a flying notion of their own, about *the nature of things in general*, I am by no means bound to go after them any farther. They admit, as I think they must do, that these words, “My kingdom is not of this world,” are not delivered as a law, to regulate payments of the clergy. They admit, in other words, that according to plain sense, it should be scored out of the interdict; and that ought to be quite enough. But because it may retain after all the whole force of a law, upon their most peculiar minds, and so carry every thing in the face of their own better understandings, I must crave your permission to go after them for a moment, and try if, speaking to them with all kindness, I can possibly persuade them to some sort of discretion.

The class of persons I am speaking of have a peculiar constitution of mind—a peculiar, and in some respects most precious temperament, which, while it helps to place them among the very best commentators on certain passages of scripture, renders them at the same time the most incompetent of all for the handling of other passages. The thing that unfits them for being sound expositors of certain texts, is just an excess of sensibility. They seem to me to possess the finer and more ethereal qualities of mind in disproportionate profusion. It is not that they altogether want ballast, but there is somehow about them a strange propensity to fly. They are as clear headed as their neighbours, but then they have a great deal more

heart. They relish plain sense well enough, but they revel in refined and attenuated sentiment. They would have every thing sublimated, and carried aloft, to the farthest possible remoteness from all commonplace and all external perception. Even a Christian's spirituality must, in their view, be abstracted, and if possible divorced from all sublunary things; and sanctity will never thrive well without a life of seclusion. Could they accomplish their own wishes, the Church or spiritual kingdom, the whole community of believers, would be much like the vision which the prophet saw of the New Jerusalem; with this difference only, that whereas the prophet beheld her descending from the clouds, they would keep her suspended there. She would be kept hanging and hovering away in the clouds for ever, and never light upon the earth at all, lest contaminated by the contact. And this being unattainable, they will try the thing that comes nearest to it. They will try, by all possible inventions, to separate the clergy, and make them as near as possible a set of unearthly ministrants, who shall never speak upon any thing but their own peculiar profession, and scarce ever be visible but as shadows in some dim religious apartment, where the very atmosphere breathes sacredness. It is a very great loss to me with these excellent persons, who are really at heart my best friends, that they have essentially the feeling of its being a miserable pity that I must be seen in the streets; and I am quite sensible how it is sinking me immeasurably in their ideal veneration,

that now, though at a great sacrifice of feeling, I discourse from a platform. Their general rule is just this, that they will always reckon us more spiritual, in proportion as we live less like mere human beings. And though they are the last persons upon earth that would grudge us a maintenance, for "I bear them record, that if it were possible they would pluck out their own eyes, and give them to their ministers," yet with all this excessive and over-generous partiality, such are their refined notions about an absolute abstractedness from all sublunary things, that they would begin to think us quite perfect, if like mere ghostly existences we never took meat and drink—if anyhow we could contrive to live merely upon air, or, what would be better still, could we live absolutely upon nothing.

I know quite well that this is stated extravagantly, but it makes you all the more sensible of the kind of thing I am speaking of. Just suppose, then, that any of these good people is directed to this text, with even a very little of this fancifulness running or rather flying in his head, as his preparation for criticism; and he is confidently told by several otherwise good ministers, who have been always and very deservedly respected in society, that when our blessed Lord says, "My kingdom is not of this world," he ordains that his kingdom or Church shall be absolutely, or as far as possible, fashioned like an unearthly thing. It is scarce possible for that man, with his mind biassed as it is, to recall to his recollection, though he perfectly

knows it, that the kingdom is not the clergy ; and still less is it possible for him to perceive from the plain scope of the passage in which these words occur, that our Lord, as I have also shewed you, is not speaking of dissevering the one kingdom from the other, but he is telling, on the contrary, that the two can consist together. The man is bewitched by his fancy and cannot enter into plain sense. And it is to this preference of mere sentiment, therefore, by which plain sense is set aside, that I ascribe all the delusion which has been so zealously propagated by many who should have known better than to disseminate such egregious perversions of God's word among the people. And on this point I had once intended to shew those good people more at large, by certain very obvious remarks and reasonings upon true religion, that their own so favourite notion, of making every thing more refined, by rending it away from all corporeal alliances, is not really to promote spirituality, but to dismiss it altogether. But the subject has swelled upon me to so great a bulk, that in the view of the next clause which is still untouched upon, I shall satisfy myself with a single reference to scripture, which will have, as it ought to have, much more weight with them than a whole hour's argument. I just refer to that passage where every body knows that our blessed Lord is really warning his Church of the great danger of contamination from the moral evil of the world. It occurs in this same gospel, and is familiar to all of us. "I have given them thy word," says he, "and the world hath

hated them, because they are not of the world even as I am not of the world. *I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.* They are not of the world even as I am not of the world.” Our blessed Lord in these words, though speaking to the Father, was speaking also, as he tells us, for the instruction of those disciples who stood by and overheard him. And the remarkable peculiarity which seems entirely to have escaped attention from those who run away with the notion, that the Church, being a spiritual body, would be more accordant with her Redeemer’s views if stripped of her temporal maintenance—the remarkable peculiarity which I entreat your attention to, is, that our Lord puts into the very heart of that admonitory passage which I have now quoted from his prayer—he puts into the heart of it this most striking, and especially to such as you, most instructive parenthesis, “*I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil,*”—as much as to say, they must mix with and impenetrate that world—that mass of moral evil. They are the salt of the earth, and it is most necessary for them to mingle with, ameliorate and preserve its else corrupting materials. Warning the Church, as he does twice over, that she was not to be of the world, he inserts between the two warnings this memorable caveat, “*I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world.*” Do you not see there that he anticipates your exact state of mind, and

warns you against it, by inserting parenthetically this exposition of his own mind? Do you not see there how he cautions you against rushing blindly, like devotees, into the egregious extravagance of imagining, that you fulfil his desires more accurately by running to the utmost limits of your own fantastic inventions? And are not those Christian ministers the truest friends of the Christian people, who tell them to beware of being led to plead Christ's warrant for a species of change, which it is plain as any thing he never spoke about, unless to denounce it, in common with all wilfulness, and all manner of uncalled for, and utterly unprovoked aggression.

II. I would venture to hope then, that we have now done our duty, so far as respects what I called the first clause of the interdict,—so that perceiving how it is neither good sense, nor genuine seriousness, to speak of it as a law, against our future arguments for endowments, we shall, at least pretty unanimously, set that clause aside. And so without farther trial of your patience, at least upon that score, I proceed to the second clause, intending to discuss it very thoroughly indeed, but in very much shorter compass.

Transcribed from the ixth chapter of 1 Corinthians, verses 7, 11, 13, 14, it stands thus in the words of St Paul: “Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth

not of the milk of the flock? If we have sown unto you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? Do ye not know, that they who minister about holy things live *of the things* of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." The last of the verses now read: "Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel,"—that verse our opponents say legislates for their Voluntary scheme, to the exclusion of every other. And when respectable Voluntary ministers get up here and there, over Scotland,—men beloved by their own people, and deservedly respected in general society, and they proclaim with great joy, that they have seen a new light, which has risen upon them from the western side of the ocean, the new world of America, I am not in the least surprised, that, though new lights are suspicious things, and especially lights arising from that quarter of the sky, where the sun most duly sets, and where I am sure he has never risen upon us, from the creation of the world; yet I am not in the least surprised, at your being startled by the clamour, much as you would be at this present moment, were there to commence out of doors, the furious beating of a drum, or the sudden fire of a cannon. I employ these illustrations, because I reckon the interpretation of our opponents here to be just as clearly a battling of *sound* against *sense*, as it was in the case already answered, a

battling of *sentiment* against *sense*. And this being the only difference, the sound will no doubt be the more easily pacified.

1. Take then, first of all, that boasted verse by itself. In the Bible, from which I ordinarily write, it is printed in three lines, and I am obliged to shew, for the sake of truth, that there are just as many substitutions of sound for sense in our opponents' mode of explaining them. To begin with the lowest or concluding line of the said verse, as the most distinct way of explaining these three errors which our opponents have fallen into; let me observe in the first place, that when St Paul speaks of ministers living, "*of*" or by "*the gospel*," the expression is evidently the most general one possible; alluding just to their having a livelihood in return for their services in some one way or other. Whereas, if our opponents will look to any thing farther than the mere sound of the syllables, and really attempt to make the sense of these expressions agree with their exclusive views, they must say, that the sense of the word *gospel* here, is certainly something new—it is seat rents, or bonds of cautionary, or the free gifts of a congregation, or something made up of all these things together. But, for the sake of peace and good neighbourhood, I consent that they shall understand it in that sense; and absurd enough though it is, to say that St Paul refers to any payment exclusively, or to all that lot of miscellaneous payments exclusively, and calls them "*the gospel*,"—yet for peace sake I shall concede as much, and then we ascend to the

second line, where I find these words, “the Lord hath ordained that they which preach the gospel should live,” and so forth. Here, I say, is another error, in the interpretation by our opponents, for they explain the words “*ordained*” and “*should*,” as intimating a peremptory command, compelling ministers to live in one way, and not to live in any other. And yet St Paul tried another way, and one by no means very comfortable, for rather than live in *that* way, he wrought with his own hands. We now rise to the first line, the crowning one of the whole, where I find the words “*Even so*,” or “*in like manner*,” and if that expression is not a mere sound, it must refer to some one or more cases just immediately spoken of. To suit the argument of our opponents, it should refer to but one case, and that such a case as their own: But referring to the passage, I perceive a large lot of cases thrown together, which are perfectly miscellaneous—cases of all kinds, such as the case of soldiers, and vinedressers, and shepherds, and husbandmen, and last but not least, the case of priests, under that system which provided tithes as well as offerings, and about which, to say the least, a great deal might be argued for us. It is quite enough for our purpose, however, that these cases are miscellaneous, insomuch, that the first of them, is that of soldiers, who, even supposing them volunteers, were most assuredly not Voluntaries. They drew their pay from the State.

2. You will be apt to think now there can be no farther mistakes at least, for we have gone over the

whole verse: but although I would not for the world expose their false reasonings, any farther than is necessary for the sake of truth, I must notice this other error, the most important of all—namely, their having mistaken very widely the drift of the whole passage, which goes plainly to prove just the unquestionable right of ministers to a maintenance from their services in some one way or other. For this end, and for this alone, St Paul here pleads that law or ordinance, which Christ had lodged in his hands, and which he had very great need to lodge there, that he might silence by that authority, both the sordid people on the one hand, and the sentimental people on the other. For I have surely said enough to shew you in the course of our previous arguments, that besides those who would give us nothing, because they don't want us to live at all, there are others who would give us nothing, because from pure love and kindness they want us to live like angels.

3. Now, upon revising the whole passage, and looking into it more narrowly, I perceive just three different modes, or methods of remuneration mentioned. The *first*, as I already remarked, is that of soldiers paid out of the treasury. The *second*, is that of husbandmen, shepherds, and such like, paid each from his own separate farm, much like our Voluntary brethren, with each his own separate congregation; and the *third*, is that of the priests under the law, which, providing for tithes as well as offerings, was almost as perfectly like

our own mode. Now, although, as I have already said, none of all these three modes is signalized here, by the apostle's preference; although, in other words, he does not say that he commends any one of these as better than another, yet it is curious enough to see that there is one of the three, and just one, which has not escaped his dislike; and it is still more curious to see, that that happens to be the very one, with which our opponents are so prodigiously fascinated, that they won't hear of another, be it even never so tempting. Elsewhere this apostle says, "all things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient," and so here he applies that discriminating doctrine, to his case of Voluntary maintenance. He maintains it to have been quite lawful for him, but he maintains also that he waived his just right there, in consideration of his sense of its very sore inexpediency: "I have used," says he, in the very next verse, "none of these things, for it were better for me to die," and so forth. That he would have been as averse to accept of pay from the treasury, or of pay from the tithes, or, in other words, to try either of the other two modes of subsistence referred to in this passage, our opponents most assuredly are not entitled to say, since unhappily for himself, he was never tried in that fashion. But when we behold that great man, who, like his brethren of the apostleship, doubtless reckoned his time for preaching so very precious, that he grudged to spare even so much of it as to look after the poor's funds; styling that not a little contemptuous-

ly, a "leaving of the ministry of the word to go and serve tables,"—when you see that mighty and so zealous minister, nevertheless, devoting, perhaps, so much as an half or two-thirds of the day to earn the wages of an handicraft, rather than avail himself of his unquestionable right to be subsisted in the same way as are our Voluntary brethren, you sure enough understand, that so far from *their* plan being, as they imagine, Paul's favourite expedient, and the very *beau ideal* of all financial arrangements, it is in point of fact the only expedient, so far as the world knows, which that inspired minister disliked—the only expedient of which I am free to say that he held it in reserve as his very last resort—that so far from desiring he could only be driven to it—and that just as when the ship that carried him was driven to and fro in Adria, and perishing by stress of weather, he would have run her into any harbour, even so but no otherwise, could that inspired minister be driven to avail himself of his undoubted right to the contributions of the people. Which of you does not see in fact that he took exactly the same view that we have taken in this controversy, and which the Established Church of Scotland has long ago declared to be her view, by resorting to her Chapels of ease, and more recently by resorting to her Accommodation Society. She falls back upon that plan, when she cannot do better. She holds that plan in all circumstances to be lawful, but circumstances of distress alone can render that plan expedient. In sentiment she is most liberal, contending as she has ever

done, that the Voluntary scheme, besides being quite lawful, is supplying in a Christian way her own great lack of service. And she is holding only to her purpose of trying some better scheme so soon as Providence may make it possible. And were our Voluntary brethren, instead of quarrelling with everybody, and representing their own favourite scheme, as the only scheme that is innocent or at all dutiful to Christ—were they just to give over that, and take a lesson of liberality from the declared mind of the Church, we might yet come together as brethren indeed, and embrace as our fathers had use to do, in the bonds of the truest charity.

I must now, on every account, draw to a close, and end almost as abruptly as I began. I trust I have proved that our Lord and his Apostles say nothing against us. And that having shewn their perfect silence, so far as concerns any speaking against us, I may, without being understood to insinuate disrespect or unkindness, recommend that same silence to our opponents as a very fitting example.

If it were not encroaching on the department of my successors, I could readily shew how that silence of Christ and his apostles is indeed a most powerful argument for our side of the controversy. For even without any gift of prophecy, St. Paul must have foreseen that his successors in the ministry, inheriting his own antipathy to voluntary contributions, would try to get hold of a State endowment as soon as ever they could.

He must have foreseen that they would plead the precedent then existing in the Jewish Church, and innumerable sanctions distributed throughout the Word of God. But though he warns the Church of heresies and of the rise of the Man of Sin, twice as many centuries forward, as was the rise of a State endowment, he never once mentions that as an evil to guard against. Strange, unaccountable silence, if a State endowment corrupt us! But I must not forget that I am sent hither this night as a mere hewer of wood—a mere clearer of the ground, and nothing more than a pioneer for the intended march of the regulars. And though I could have wished to indulge now for a little in certain practical considerations, apart from controversy altogether, I shall just shut up the whole with one very solemn extract, from the mighty sayings of Him, whose words I have been vindicating from delusive interpretations: And I doubt not you will at once perceive how consonant it is to the views I have been insisting for, inasmuch as it points to the proper and the only time, when the Church shall indeed be rent away, and separated in every sense, and set apart by herself: “The kingdom of heaven”—the Church we have been discoursing of—“is like unto a net that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind, which, WHEN IT WAS FULL,” (*but not till then,*) “they drew to shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels but cast the bad away.” So shall it be at the going forth of the angels at the end of the world.—Amen.

LECTURE IV.

THE DUTY OF THE STATE TO ENDOW THE CHURCH, &c.

THE subject of this evening's Lecture, is the Duty of the State, on the one hand, to Endow the Church, and the Duty of the Church, on the other, to accept the Endowment. Independently altogether of that special temporary interest, which so many circumstances conspire at present to throw around this subject, there are few inquiries perhaps that open up a nobler or more interesting field of contemplation,—few, involving principles at once so large and comprehensive, so thoroughly practical, and so capable of being well defined and ascertained. Without detaining you with further preface, I shall enter at once on the Duty of the State to Endow the Church: and here my position is, that the State lies under this obligation, *first*, for the sake of the Church, and *secondly*, for its own sake,—in connection with both, for the honour of God.

First, For the sake of the Church, and God's honour in connection with her, the State is bound to endow the Church.

When we speak of the State being under obligation in this or any other matter, it is of course supposed that the State (to use the words of an illustrious writer on the Law of Nations) is "a moral person, who possesses an understanding and will peculiar to herself, and is susceptible of obligations and rights."* As the individual, so the society composed of individuals united, and acting by that supreme power which represents it, has its affairs and interests; deliberates and resolves; enjoys rights; and incurs obligations towards its own individual members, towards other nations or coordinate societies, in short, towards whatever party it is capable of standing in any kind of connection with. Now, from this principle, so very simple and obvious, it follows undeniably, that the State—this same moral person—derives its existence, like all other persons, ultimately from God, is dependant on his providence for its preservation, is bound in all its proceedings to serve him and consult his honour, and is responsible to him chiefly and ultimately for all its actions. This, be it carefully observed, is no peculiar dictate of Scripture. It belongs to natural religion, and is primarily taught by reason and the light of nature. Scripture, indeed, comes in,

* Vattel's Law of Nations, Preliminaries, § 2.

gloriously to recognise, confirm and enforce it, as well as to open up new applications and results of it. But there needs no more than the knowledge of a God, and that the State is a moral person, having its own interests, rights, obligations and responsibilities, to warrant the conclusion—that, whatever may be the special form of government, or method of constituting the governors, the State owes its existence ultimately to God; that, whatever be its more immediate and peculiar duties, it is bound, as his intelligent, dependant creature, to serve and honour him; and that, above all subordinate responsibilities, it is to Him principally and finally responsible for its whole procedure. Lying, however, as this conclusion does, so near the foundation of the whole present controversy, I shall take leave, before passing from it to the next step of my argument, to confirm it by a few additional words from the same writer on the Law of Nations,—only observing in the first place, that, however accordant his principles are with scripture, they are drawn by him, not at all from scripture, but from reason alone; and that it is on this account I appeal to his authority, rather than at once to scripture, since the matter does not belong to the peculiar province of revelation, and is only rendered obscure when supposed to belong to it. “A nation,” then, says the great Vattel, whose work on the Law of Nations stands so high all over Europe,—“a nation, while she acts in common or in a body, is a moral person, who is not less obliged than any individual to obey the laws of nature :” (the laws of nature

are of course just the laws of the Author of nature, as revealed by the constitution of that nature he has given us.) “That moral person,” he proceeds, “resides in those who are invested with the public authority, and represent the entire nation. Whether this be the common council of the nation, an aristocratic body, or a monarch, this conductor and representative of the nation, this sovereign of whatever kind, is therefore indispensably obliged,”—and so on. “A nation,” he continues, “ought to be pious. The superiors intrusted with the public affairs should constantly endeavour to deserve the approbation of their Divine sovereign; and whatever they do in the name of the State, ought to be regulated by this grand view.” Once more: “If all men are bound to serve God, the entire nation, in her national capacity, is doubtless obliged to serve and honour him.”*

Well; the State, being thus bound to acknowledge, to serve, and to honour God, has in its hands a revelation of his will. (Our argument is not with avowed infidels.) In so far as this revelation may contain what bears on the rights and duties of nations, the general obligation of the State to serve God, of course involves the special duty of receiving and submitting to his revealed will. The same light of nature which teaches the duty of honouring God in general, cannot but teach that of bowing to any revelation of his will which it may please Him to give. In this revelation,

* Vattel, B. i. Ch. xi. § 117. Ch. xii. § 125, 129.

then, the State finds the account of that great spiritual society, the Church, instituted in name of Jehovah the nation's God, by the Lord Jesus Christ, himself in his divine character the God of the nation. Contemplating this society, the State finds her to have been formed for an end at once purely spiritual, and supremely excellent, even the preparing of men, by godliness, righteousness, temperance and charity, for that eternal life of which the present is at best but the first stage. It finds, what indeed might be expected from the fact of one God being the author of both the State and the Church, that, as the ends of this society are spiritual, and her province the conscience and the heart, so, in reaching these ends and that province, she employs only such means as are suitable to their nature, usurps no authority over empires, claims no control over the persons and properties of men, only will not sacrifice that spiritual liberty wherewith Christ at the price of his blood hath made her free. The State thus perceives that, so far from having occasion to be jealous of the Church, the Church may, on the contrary, be the means of so winning men over to the love of those laws which mere authority can but ill enforce, as eminently to subserve the peculiar ends of civil government. But independently of this altogether, the State perceives that if, by countenance, pledge of protection against enemies, or any other means, it can, without neglecting its own peculiar duties, promote the welfare of a society so dear in the sight of God, with which the members of the State

have themselves individually so close a connection, and which, by means so excellent, pursues ends so glorious and beneficial, then in no way can it better discharge the great duty of gratitude, honour and service which it owes to God, as the Author of its own existence and well-being.

The State will naturally consider further, that if, according to the acknowledged principles of international law, an independent nation is bound to contribute to the welfare of other nations, whatsoever it can consistently with its own, and that for the mere brotherhood established by nature between all mankind, societies as well as individuals,—much more must a nation be bound to act thus towards the Church, on account of the superior excellence of her objects to those of coordinate civil societies; on account of the identity, in at least very many instances, of the Church's members with its own; in gratitude for invaluable benefits received; and, in a word, because Scripture declares the great ultimate end of empires themselves, to be the promoting of this very kingdom of Christ, into whose hands, as Mediator, all things have for that end been given.

Proceeding, then, to what will now with the State form the only question, namely, by what means it may be able most effectually to promote the Church's welfare,—it will first of all perceive the extreme impropriety, nay absurdity of endeavouring to attach men to the Church by persecution or force, since that were only to defeat the great spiritual ends of her institu-

tion. In like manner the State, esteeming itself honoured in promoting anyway the interests of the Church, will see it both unjustifiable and absurd, in any circumstances to demand of her, as in return for a boon conferred, the sacrifice of any one right or liberty which Christ has conferred upon her,—the power, for example, of appointing her own office-bearers, and convoking her own assemblies. But then, on the other side, the State can be at no loss to discover very important services, which, without at all obtruding itself into her province, or officiously traversing her spiritual designs, it has the power, and may enjoy the privilege of rendering her. Perceiving, for example, that from the very nature of christianity, it necessarily assumes an offensive attitude towards all other systems of religion, and on that account could not claim legal protection against the violence and insults of their votaries, unless recognised by the law as Divine, the State will so incorporate the christian faith with the statutes of the realm, as shall afford its ministers a title to protection, in proclaiming openly and fearlessly even its most exclusive and offensive doctrines. Finding, again, that Christ has commanded his disciples to hallow the first day of the week, by a holy resting on that day from worldly employments and recreations, and that, in order to the right and full and safe discharge of this duty, infidel and profane men must be restrained from the open violation of it, the State will use its authority for that purpose. In one word, not to multiply examples, per-

ceiving that, in order to the Church attaining aright her great ends, a gospel ministry must be planted and suitably maintained in every part of the country ; that large pecuniary supplies are requisite for the erecting of churches, and providing of such a livelihood for the ministers of the gospel, as that, free of anxiety, they may devote themselves wholly to their sacred calling; and, in a word, that the State has the power of contributing towards this great object, to an extent and with an energy which no other body of men, civil or ecclesiastical, can pretend to reach,—the State, I say, perceiving all this, will feel itself called upon to lend the national aid, to such an extent as may seem advisable on a consideration jointly of what the necessities of the Church require, and the exigencies of the State permit.

And now arises the question—supposing the State in point of fact to reason, resolve and act as I have here supposed, wherein would the State in so doing overstep the limits of its duty? What is there in all that has been supposed, prejudicial to the independence of the Church? What, alien from the province of the State? What, implying persecution for conscience sake? What, that is not imperatively required at the hands of the State, towards its own Creator, Upholder and Benefactor? It may, indeed, be thought with but too much appearance of truth, that, in this depraved condition of our nature, we can scarcely venture to expect that States will to the full extent embrace and act on principles like these. But surely

this affords only the greater reason, why, instead of abandoning, we should perpetually reiterate them: for I may here adopt the language of that author to whom I have already so often referred, when speaking of some of the great principles of international Law:—
“ And why should we not hope still to find among those who are at the head of affairs, some wise individuals who are convinced of this great truth, that virtue is, even for sovereigns and political bodies, the most certain road to prosperity and happiness? There is at least one benefit to be expected from the open assertion and publication of sound maxims, which is, that even those who relish them the least, are thereby laid under a necessity of keeping within some bounds, lest they should forfeit their characters altogether. To flatter ourselves with the vain expectation, that men, and especially men in power, will be inclined strictly to conform to the laws of nature, would be a gross mistake; and to renounce all hope of making impression on some of them, would be to give up mankind for lost.”*

But we have not yet exhibited our argument for the Duty of the State in half its strength. Hitherto we have simply supposed that the State, in endowing the Church, would not *injure* its own interests; and, indeed, it was necessary to suppose this, and so to limit the endowment by the exigencies of the State, since neither society nor individual may lawfully attend to the duties of another, at the expense of his own. But

* Vattel, B. ii. Ch. i. § 1.

now to what tenfold strength will the argument rise, when we shall have seen that the Endowment of the Church, instead of being prejudicial to the State, is so necessary to its welfare, that, independently of the Church's interests altogether, the State is bound to to endow her *for the sake of its-own*. It is of much importance indeed, in considering this subject, to begin with the interests of the Church, and the honour of God in connection with them, because when we lay our foundation in the interests of the State, we are prone to sacrifice to these the spirituality and independence of the Church,—(a sacrifice, by the way, which cannot be made without sacrificing in the end the interests of the State also.) At the same time we are quite willing to allow, that the argument arising from national interests, if not more really, is at least more manifestly unanswerable, than that which we have just drawn from the interests of the Church.

I am persuaded that it is perfectly unnecessary for me to enter into any formal proof, that Religion is the only sure bulwark of national prosperity and happiness; and that that State which should give itself no concern for the religious instruction of its people, would neglect the principal means Providence had placed in its hands, for maintaining the authority of law, preserving order, protecting the rights of property, and securing the observance of justice between man and man. Where is the writer of the least eminence, ancient or modern, on public law and the duties of sovereigns, who does not make the care of religion one of their first, if not their very first duty towards their people,

and God in respect of them? How, for example, could the supreme power in a country, offer a higher insult to God, or inflict a deeper injury on its subjects, than by exacting of them Oaths, without seeing to their instruction in those principles of religion on which the sacredness of an oath depends? Will mere brute force give effect to law, if the mass of a community love not peace, order and justice, for their own sake? Will an unprincipled people wait a recissory statute? Will men to whom plunder is dearer than equity, prefer resigning their prey to taking their chance of punishment? Who knows not that, when crimes have ceased to shock a nation's moral sense, punishments are useless,—in short, that Virtue is that grand animating principle of the body-politick, the departure of which leaves it but a noisome carcass ready to be devoured by birds of prey? But I am dwelling too long on what really requires but to be stated to commend itself to every sober man,—that, so far are States from being bound to give themselves no concern about the religion of their people, they are on the contrary bound, as they would avoid the commission of national suicide, to use every means within their reach for promoting that religion which is virtue's only solid basis,—for leading men of all orders and conditions to believe and feel themselves under the government of One, whose inspection they cannot elude, from whose tribunal they cannot withdraw, whose power is irresistible, and his wrath intolerable. The rights of conscience forbid the State taking anything to do with

religion? Why, that is just to say that the rights of conscience forbid the State taking anything to do with the chief and only solid basis of its own authority. I can conceive nothing more insulting to States, than the language which has of late been held by certain persons, that religion is a matter with which States have no right to intermeddle.

But now assuming that the State is not only entitled, but for its own sake bound to use every suitable means for promoting religion, the next question with a State convinced of this will of course be,—*by what means* religion shall through its instrumentality be most effectually promoted. Looking into God's Word, (for we have seen already that the State, as God's intelligent and responsible creature, is bound by the dictates of that word, in so far as they bear on its peculiar rights and duties,) it not only finds in general, that the very object of the Church's institution and preservation, is to promote religion, justice, sobriety and charity among men, but that, for the more effectual attaining of this end, Christ has established in the Church an order of men, for the express purpose of inculcating on mankind his heavenly doctrines and precepts. It is not possible that the State, being Christian, should fail to see in the ministers of the gospel the very men, who, from their sacred office, the promised blessing of Christ on their ministrations, their education, studies, character, and entire dedication to the work of religious instruction, are alone calculated fully to accomplish the great end which the

State would desire to promote. While it perceives, however, that in the work of religious culture and moral amelioration, the ministers of the gospel must be at least the grand agents, there are *two things* which cannot fail to impress themselves on an intelligent Government. The one is, that however liberal the members of the Church may be, and however great things may through their liberality be capable of being accomplished, yet, viewing the object to be attained as nothing less than the christian instruction of the whole population of the country, it were preposterous to expect the accomplishment of this, by means of mere private contributions. But the *second* thing is this, that it were the most palpable injustice on the part of the State, to calculate on the Church rendering it this greatest of all possible services, without furnishing her at least in part with the means for this purpose. It were in fact difficult to say, whether the State would be more ridiculous in expecting, or more unjust in asking the Church to accomplish such an object without its aid. In reply to any one objecting that the national aid was superfluous, it could not fail instantly to occur to an intelligent Government, first of all, that the presumption against this was so exceedingly strong, that the idea could only have arisen in the mind of one jealous on other grounds altogether, of its interference, and that nothing short of an absolute demonstration on the matter of fact could avail to set that presumption aside; and, in the second place, that even if the Church could with

some plausibility be supposed capable of both doing the whole work and bearing the whole burden, yet there could be no sort of reason why she *should*, but every possible reason, on the contrary, why the State should share it with her, the work to be accomplished being as much the State's as hers; that of all monies laid out for the public benefit, none could promise so rich a harvest of national prosperity and happiness as those placed in the Church's hands for the good of the country; and that, in fact, those who talked of the State doing nothing for religion, in order to save the national resources, might just as well talk of a man saving his resources by abstaining from food and starving himself. Be it still borne in mind, that the State would naturally perceive not only the absurdity of employing any kind of persecution to attach men to the Church, but the unjustifiableness of requiring her, in return for an endowment, to sacrifice any one right or liberty by Christ conferred upon her, since, in the first place, such sacrifice would be a dereliction of duty on her part, and in the second place, the endowment which alone could be supposed to justify the State in requiring it, could not fail of being more than repaid in benefits manifold and incalculable conferred upon her by the State.

And now I have just to repeat, with a slight alteration, the challenge given under the former head: supposing the State in point of fact to reason and act as I have here supposed, wherein would the State

in so doing overstep the limits of its duty? What is there in all that has been supposed, prejudicial to the independence of the Church? What, alien from the province of the State? What, implying persecution for conscience sake? What, that is not imperatively required at the hands of the State *towards its own subjects*, and towards God, its own creator and sovereign, in respect of them? I cannot help adding that if, as we formerly saw, the State would commit a violation of duty in not endowing the Church, for the sake of the Church herself, provided the endowment could be given without positive injury to the State, this first argument must now acquire tenfold strength, and that violation of duty must rise to an absolute contempt of the Church and of her God; since we have seen that, instead of being prejudicial to the interests of the State, the endowment is a matter of positive duty with a view to these very interests.

If we should suppose the State desirous of still further confirmation in this great duty, it would find it in the fact, that in the only Civil Polity ever established immediately by God, the support of the ministers of religion was not left dependant on the goodwill of the people, but was made the subject of express enactment, setting apart certain fixed revenues as their property. It is very true that this rule of Jewish law does not simply as such bind other nations: but since *the grounds* on which the rule proceeded can be shewn not to have been ceremonial, or in any way peculiarly Jewish, but to have been moral

and universal, applicable alike to the ministers of religion in every age, the case must on that account be held as indicating the divine will respecting this matter, not, indeed, in its details, but in its great leading principles. We find the Apostle Paul, in the 9th of 1st Corinthians, inferring by analogy from the Levitical institutions, the right of christian ministers to a due maintenance from some quarter or other. That the analogy extends to the placing of that maintenance on some such footing of law as shall ensure its sufficiency and its permanence, I affirm on this simple ground, that I can imagine no reason why the maintenance of Jewish, any more than of Christian ordinances should have been placed on a secure and permanent footing, nor any thing in the nature of Christian institutions, as distinguished from Jewish, which renders *their* maintenance independent of all other security than is found in the abilities and feelings of individuals.

Another confirmation of the great duty in question, the State might find in that interesting fact of Old Testament history, that on many occasions, with the most marked approbation of God, the rulers of heathen states did, without any special warrant from God, but simply from reverence for a religion which they could not but regard as somehow divine, contribute of the national property towards the support and extension of the Church,—an example this, which, while free from all peculiarities of theocracy, type, ceremony,

is surely applicable *a fortiori* to the case of a christian nation, ruled by christian governors.

The State might find the proof further augmented by various prophetic announcements of the condition of the Church under the gospel, where it is not foretold simply, but in triumphant strains sung, that the kings of the earth should not only in general act as nursing-fathers to the Church, but specially should pour silver and gold into her treasures, for the rearing and beautifying of that temple which the kings of other days had laboured to destroy.

In one word, the State, instead of finding all this proof shaken by the absence of an express command in the New Testament scriptures to endow the Church, would only regard its duty in the matter as further confirmed, *by the absence of a prohibition*. Let any one soberly reflect on the circumstances of the primitive Church, and he will easily perceive that, supposing it to have been the will of Christ that, when Christianity should have become the religion of the empire, it should receive the imperial support, an explicit command to this effect was not to be expected, and was not necessary to establish the duty. Let it be borne in mind that at the time the Apostles wrote, Christianity had not been embraced either by the emperor or the empire;—that without this it could not possibly obtain the national aid;—that any express injunctions which might in such circumstances have been given, could not fail, as the Church increased in numbers and influence, to prove highly dangerous to

her welfare, encouraging her members, on the one hand, from a natural desire to see their Master's will carried into effect, to employ measures inconsistent with their due subjection to the civil power, and furnishing the emperors, on the other, with an excellent plea to justify their jealousy and persecution of the Church;—that it was the Apostolic method, with reference to such duties (the abolition of slavery for example) as were much mixed up with existing civil institutions, instead of entering into details, to lay down general principles out of which the details would naturally be seen to flow, so soon as circumstances should admit of the duties being in the substance of them discharged;—that, as regards a national support of the Church, so soon as the State actually came into the requisite circumstances, the New Testament presented to its view such great principles as that in the 13th of Romans—“he is the minister of God to thee for good—” a principle from which the duty of the State to recognise and support the Church might by good and necessary consequence be inferred;—and, in a word, that the State had also before its eyes divinely approved examples of such support, in that part of Scripture where alone it could expect to find them, so that, before the presumption arising from these could be set aside, an express prohibition would have been requisite;—let these things be borne in mind, and it will be seen that, however the State might be confirmed in its duty to endow by the absence of a New Testament prohibi-

tion, it could in no degree be shaken by the absence of an explicit command.

Desirous as I have been to present an unbroken view of what appeared the chief points in the whole argument, there are two or three matters at which I have hitherto only glanced in passing, that seem to require a somewhat more special notice.

You may recollect that, in a former part of the Lecture, we supposed the State, on contemplating the Church of Christ, to find her a spiritual society, formed for spiritual ends, pursuing these by spiritual means, usurping no authority over empires, and claiming no control over the persons and properties of men; and that from all this we supposed the State to conclude that, instead of having any occasion to be jealous of the Church, the latter might prove, on the contrary, highly instrumental in promoting the peculiar ends of civil government. Now what I am desirous to fix your attention upon here is this, that that very *spirituality* of the Church which our opponents boast as their fundamental argument, so far from rendering her unfit to receive aid from the State, is in reality one of the chief things which fit her for obtaining it. Put the case for a moment that the Church were *not* a spiritual society, but claimed control over property, for example, and a right to employ the sword for accomplishing her ends. It is manifest that in that case, in the first place she could have *no need* of the national aid, having assumed to herself national powers,

and in the second place, that she would thus just constitute with respect to the State an *imperium in imperio*, meriting both the jealousy and hostility of the State. But since the Church is of a different nature altogether, having in view spiritual ends, and claiming no right to pursue these by other than spiritual means, the way is thus opened up for a friendly and harmonious cooperation between her and the State, for the accomplishing of their respective objects, which objects, though different indeed, are so far, you will observe, from being contrary or discordant, that as the State cannot but always by good government benefit the Church, so the Church, in the very act of following out her spiritual vocation, cannot but contribute to the welfare of the State.

But you may further recollect, that we supposed the State, finding the Church in the enjoyment of certain spiritual rights and liberties, to perceive the utter unjustifiableness of requiring her to purchase the national aid by the sacrifice of these ; both because that aid could not fail of being fully compensated in benefits returned by her to the nation, and because the State could never, consistently with its own duty to God, require the Church to betray her Lord by the sacrifice of her rights. Now this is what I would entreat you to mark here—that, so far is it from being true, as our Opponents universally, and some too of our ill informed friends tell us, that the State, endowing the Church, ought in return to have a share of her liberties,—the right, for example, of appointing

her ministers,—that, on the contrary, the very same duty to God which we have seen obliging the State to endow the Church, manifestly forbids its touching even the least of her scriptural, divinely bestowed rights; not to say besides, that the very notion of a boon requiring a sacrifice in return is utterly groundless; the endowment being not only matter of duty, but far more than repaid by the Church in the spiritual, intellectual, moral and political improvement of the country by her means.

I have only to recall your attention to one other point. In reply to any one objecting that, for the work of conveying christian instruction to the whole population of the country, the national aid was superfluous,—that the Church could of herself both do the whole work and bear the whole pecuniary burden, we supposed, you may remember, that it could not fail instantly to occur to an intelligent Government, not only that there was no sort of reason why the Church should bear the whole burden of a work as much the State's as hers, *but* that the presumption against the objector's statement of fact was so exceedingly strong, that the idea could only have arisen in the mind of one *jealous on other grounds*, of the State's interfering at all; and that to set aside that presumption nothing could suffice, short of an absolute demonstration by the objector on the matter of fact. I pray you to mark this last point. By far the most plausible objection which I can conceive an intelligent opponent making to the whole previous argument, is this that

we have throughout *assumed*, that the aid of the State is necessary, whereas this is denied, and we ourselves seem to admit that it requires proof, by offering in our Prospectus to prove it in subsequent Lectures. That we have assumed this, I admit, and shall now frankly state what I consider the exact bearing of the assumption on the force of the entire argument. Supposing it, then, to be conceded, that the object which the State ought to have in view is nothing less than the christian instruction of the entire population of the country, I hold that there is on the face of the matter so manifest and so strong a presumption against even the possibility of accomplishing the half of this object, much more the certainty of accomplishing the whole, by means of unaided private efforts, that no man of sense could ever have affirmed it possible, had he not beforehand, and on separate grounds altogether, conceived the strongest *aversion to the State lending its aid, however necessary that aid might be*. So soon, therefore, as we have found that there is not only no reason, *in point of principle*, to be averse to the State lending its aid, but that there is every thing in point of principle to justify and demand it, then are we not only entitled to assume, but bound to hold that the national aid is *not* superfluous, until the objector present a demonstration that it is, strong enough to set aside the whole force at once of the presumption, and of all the principles. In short our opinion is, that the whole Establishment question is on our part, properly at this point closed ; and that we might now bid fare-

well to our Opponents, hoping to see them in that character no more, at all events until furnished with their perfectly full and clear demonstration, in point of fact, that the national aid is absolutely useless, and that the State may confidently reckon on the whole work of christian instruction being performed by means of private contributions alone. At the same time we feel so full a persuasion, that the facts of the case are in perfect accordance with its principles and presumptions, that we have therefore offered ourselves to take up the question of fact or expediency.

And now, if the foregoing line of argument has been successfully followed out, you will perceive that there is no need of any separate discussion of that second department of our subject,—the Duty of the Church to accept the National Endowment. The duty of the Church to *accept*, is correlative to, necessarily arises out of, and rests on substantially the same grounds with the duty of the State to *offer*. Of course we mean not that the one party either must or may accept, on any terms on which the other may please to offer. We have already seen that the State is bound to propose no terms incompatible with the Church's scriptural rights and liberties : and if in any instance, influenced by mistaken views of national interest, and regardless of its duty to God and to his Church, the State should clog its endowment with conditions fatal to her liberties, then is it hers, in the discharge of that first of duties, allegiance to her Divine Head, to decline the national proposals. It is sufficiently evident

on the other hand, that the Church would not be justified in declining,—simply because the endowment could not be secured in all respects on the very best footing. If with her utmost exertions, she cannot accomplish this, and yet be satisfied that, all things taken together, she can accept, consistently with duty to her Head, then she owes it to Herself, to the State, to God, so to do, resolving of course at the same time, that she will leave no due means unemployed, for obtaining whatever change on the constitution of the endowment it may seem to require.

THE END.

LECTURE IV.

THE DUTY OF THE STATE TO ENDOW THE CHURCH, &c.

THE subject of this evening's Lecture, is the Duty of the State, on the one hand, to Endow the Church, and the Duty of the Church, on the other, to accept the Endowment. Independently altogether of that special temporary interest, which so many circumstances conspire at present to throw around this subject, there are few inquiries perhaps that open up a nobler or more interesting field of contemplation,—few, involving principles at once so large and comprehensive, so thoroughly practical, and so capable of being well defined and ascertained. Without detaining you with further preface, I shall enter at once on the Duty of the State to Endow the Church: and here my position is, that the State lies under this obligation, *first*, for the sake of the Church, and *secondly*, for its own sake,—in connection with both, for the honour of God.

First, For the sake of the Church, and God's honour in connection with her, the State is bound to endow the Church.

When we speak of the State being under obligation in this or any other matter, it is of course supposed that the State (to use the words of an illustrious writer on the Law of Nations) is "a moral person, who possesses an understanding and will peculiar to herself, and is susceptible of obligations and rights."* As the individual, so the society composed of individuals united, and acting by that supreme power which represents it, has its affairs and interests; deliberates and resolves; enjoys rights; and incurs obligations towards its own individual members, towards other nations or coordinate societies, in short, towards whatever party it is capable of standing in any kind of connection with. Now, from this principle, so very simple and obvious, it follows undeniably, that the State—this same moral person—derives its existence, like all other persons, ultimately from God, is dependant on his providence for its preservation, is bound in all its proceedings to serve him and consult his honour, and is responsible to him chiefly and ultimately for all its actions. This, be it carefully observed, is no peculiar dictate of Scripture. It belongs to natural religion, and is primarily taught by reason and the light of nature. Scripture, indeed, comes in,

* Vattel's Law of Nations, Preliminaries, § 2.

gloriously to recognise, confirm and enforce it, as well as to open up new applications and results of it. But there needs no more than the knowledge of a God, and that the State is a moral person, having its own interests, rights, obligations and responsibilities, to warrant the conclusion—that, whatever may be the special form of government, or method of constituting the governors, the State owes its existence ultimately to God; that, whatever be its more immediate and peculiar duties, it is bound, as his intelligent, dependant creature, to serve and honour him; and that, above all subordinate responsibilities, it is to Him principally and finally responsible for its whole procedure. Lying, however, as this conclusion does, so near the foundation of the whole present controversy, I shall take leave, before passing from it to the next step of my argument, to confirm it by a few additional words from the same writer on the Law of Nations,—only observing in the first place, that, however accordant his principles are with scripture, they are drawn by him, not at all from scripture, but from reason alone; and that it is on this account I appeal to his authority, rather than at once to scripture, since the matter does not belong to the peculiar province of revelation, and is only rendered obscure when supposed to belong to it. “A nation,” then, says the great Vattel, whose work on the Law of Nations stands so high all over Europe,—“a nation, while she acts in common or in a body, is a moral person, who is not less obliged than any individual to obey the laws of nature:” (the laws of nature

are of course just the laws of the Author of nature, as revealed by the constitution of that nature he has given us.) "That moral person," he proceeds, "resides in those who are invested with the public authority, and represent the entire nation. Whether this be the common council of the nation, an aristocratic body, or a monarch, this conductor and representative of the nation, this sovereign of whatever kind, is therefore indispensably obliged,"—and so on. "A nation," he continues, "ought to be pious. The superiors intrusted with the public affairs should constantly endeavour to deserve the approbation of their Divine sovereign; and whatever they do in the name of the State, ought to be regulated by this grand view." Once more: "If all men are bound to serve God, the entire nation, in her national capacity, is doubtless obliged to serve and honour him."*

Well; the State, being thus bound to acknowledge, to serve, and to honour God, has in its hands a revelation of his will. (Our argument is not with avowed infidels.) In so far as this revelation may contain what bears on the rights and duties of nations, the general obligation of the State to serve God, of course involves the special duty of receiving and submitting to his revealed will. The same light of nature which teaches the duty of honouring God in general, cannot but teach that of bowing to any revelation of his will which it may please Him to give. In this revelation,

* Vattel, B. i. Ch. xi. § 117. Ch. xii. § 125, 129.

then, the State finds the account of that great spiritual society, the Church, instituted in name of Jehovah the nation's God, by the Lord Jesus Christ, himself in his divine character the God of the nation. Contemplating this society, the State finds her to have been formed for an end at once purely spiritual, and supremely excellent, even the preparing of men, by godliness, righteousness, temperance and charity, for that eternal life of which the present is at best but the first stage. It finds, what indeed might be expected from the fact of one God being the author of both the State and the Church, that, as the ends of this society are spiritual, and her province the conscience and the heart, so, in reaching these ends and that province, she employs only such means as are suitable to their nature, usurps no authority over empires, claims no control over the persons and properties of men, only will not sacrifice that spiritual liberty wherewith Christ at the price of his blood hath made her free. The State thus perceives that, so far from having occasion to be jealous of the Church, the Church may, on the contrary, be the means of so winning men over to the love of those laws which mere authority can but ill enforce, as eminently to subserve the peculiar ends of civil government. But independently of this altogether, the State perceives that if, by countenance, pledge of protection against enemies, or any other means, it can, without neglecting its own peculiar duties, promote the welfare of a society so dear in the sight of God, with which the members of the State

have themselves individually so close a connection, and which, by means so excellent, pursues ends so glorious and beneficial, then in no way can it better discharge the great duty of gratitude, honour and service which it owes to God, as the Author of its own existence and well-being.

The State will naturally consider further, that if, according to the acknowledged principles of international law, an independent nation is bound to contribute to the welfare of other nations, whatsoever it can consistently with its own, and that for the mere brotherhood established by nature between all mankind, societies as well as individuals,—much more must a nation be bound to act thus towards the Church, on account of the superior excellence of her objects to those of coordinate civil societies; on account of the identity, in at least very many instances, of the Church's members with its own; in gratitude for invaluable benefits received; and, in a word, because Scripture declares the great ultimate end of empires themselves, to be the promoting of this very kingdom of Christ, into whose hands, as Mediator, all things have for that end been given.

Proceeding, then, to what will now with the State form the only question, namely, by what means it may be able most effectually to promote the Church's welfare,—it will first of all perceive the extreme impropriety, nay absurdity of endeavouring to attach men to the Church by persecution or force, since that were only to defeat the great spiritual ends of her institu-

tion. In like manner the State, esteeming itself honoured in promoting anyway the interests of the Church, will see it both unjustifiable and absurd, in any circumstances to demand of her, as in return for a boon conferred, the sacrifice of any one right or liberty which Christ has conferred upon her,—the power, for example, of appointing her own office-bearers, and convoking her own assemblies. But then, on the other side, the State can be at no loss to discover very important services, which, without at all obtruding itself into her province, or officiously traversing her spiritual designs, it has the power, and may enjoy the privilege of rendering her. Perceiving, for example, that from the very nature of christianity, it necessarily assumes an offensive attitude towards all other systems of religion, and on that account could not claim legal protection against the violence and insults of their votaries, unless recognised by the law as Divine, the State will so incorporate the christian faith with the statutes of the realm, as shall afford its ministers a title to protection, in proclaiming openly and fearlessly even its most exclusive and offensive doctrines. Finding, again, that Christ has commanded his disciples to hallow the first day of the week, by a holy resting on that day from worldly employments and recreations, and that, in order to the right and full and safe discharge of this duty, infidel and profane men must be restrained from the open violation of it, the State will use its authority for that purpose. In one word, not to multiply examples, per-

ceiving that, in order to the Church attaining aright her great ends, a gospel ministry must be planted and suitably maintained in every part of the country ; that large pecuniary supplies are requisite for the erecting of churches, and providing of such a livelihood for the ministers of the gospel, as that, free of anxiety, they may devote themselves wholly to their sacred calling; and, in a word, that the State has the power of contributing towards this great object, to an extent and with an energy which no other body of men, civil or ecclesiastical, can pretend to reach,—the State, I say, perceiving all this, will feel itself called upon to lend the national aid, to such an extent as may seem advisable on a consideration jointly of what the necessities of the Church require, and the exigencies of the State permit.

And now arises the question—supposing the State in point of fact to reason, resolve and act as I have here supposed, wherein would the State in so doing overstep the limits of its duty? What is there in all that has been supposed, prejudicial to the independence of the Church? What, alien from the province of the State? What, implying persecution for conscience sake? What, that is not imperatively required at the hands of the State, towards its own Creator, Upholder and Benefactor? It may, indeed, be thought with but too much appearance of truth, that, in this depraved condition of our nature, we can scarcely venture to expect that States will to the full extent embrace and act on principles like these. But surely

this affords only the greater reason, why, instead of abandoning, we should perpetually reiterate them: for I may here adopt the language of that author to whom I have already so often referred, when speaking of some of the great principles of international Law:—
“ And why should we not hope still to find among those who are at the head of affairs, some wise individuals who are convinced of this great truth, that virtue is, even for sovereigns and political bodies, the most certain road to prosperity and happiness? There is at least one benefit to be expected from the open assertion and publication of sound maxims, which is, that even those who relish them the least, are thereby laid under a necessity of keeping within some bounds, lest they should forfeit their characters altogether. To flatter ourselves with the vain expectation, that men, and especially men in power, will be inclined strictly to conform to the laws of nature, would be a gross mistake; and to renounce all hope of making impression on some of them, would be to give up mankind for lost.”*

But we have not yet exhibited our argument for the Duty of the State in half its strength. Hitherto we have simply supposed that the State, in endowing the Church, would not *injure* its own interests; and, indeed, it was necessary to suppose this, and so to limit the endowment by the exigencies of the State, since neither society nor individual may lawfully attend to the duties of another, at the expense of his own. But

* Vattel, B. ii. Ch. i. § 1.

now to what tenfold strength will the argument rise, when we shall have seen that the Endowment of the Church, instead of being prejudicial to the State, is so necessary to its welfare, that, independently of the Church's interests altogether, the State is bound to to endow her *for the sake of its own*. It is of much importance indeed, in considering this subject, to begin with the interests of the Church, and the honour of God in connection with them, because when we lay our foundation in the interests of the State, we are prone to sacrifice to these the spirituality and independence of the Church,—(a sacrifice, by the way, which cannot be made without sacrificing in the end the interests of the State also.) At the same time we are quite willing to allow, that the argument arising from national interests, if not more really, is at least more manifestly unanswerable, than that which we have just drawn from the interests of the Church.

I am persuaded that it is perfectly unnecessary for me to enter into any formal proof, that Religion is the only sure bulwark of national prosperity and happiness; and that that State which should give itself no concern for the religious instruction of its people, would neglect the principal means Providence had placed in its hands, for maintaining the authority of law, preserving order, protecting the rights of property, and securing the observance of justice between man and man. Where is the writer of the least eminence, ancient or modern, on public law and the duties of sovereigns, who does not make the care of religion one of their first, if not their very first duty towards their people,

and God in respect of them? How, for example, could the supreme power in a country, offer a higher insult to God, or inflict a deeper injury on its subjects, than by exacting of them Oaths, without seeing to their instruction in those principles of religion on which the sacredness of an oath depends? Will mere brute force give effect to law, if the mass of a community love not peace, order and justice, for their own sake? Will an unprincipled people wait a recissory statute? Will men to whom plunder is dearer than equity, prefer resigning their prey to taking their chance of punishment? Who knows not that, when crimes have ceased to shock a nation's moral sense, punishments are useless,—in short, that Virtue is that grand animating principle of the body-politick, the departure of which leaves it but a noisome carcass ready to be devoured by birds of prey? But I am dwelling too long on what really requires but to be stated to commend itself to every sober man,—that, so far are States from being bound to give themselves no concern about the religion of their people, they are on the contrary bound, as they would avoid the commission of national suicide, to use every means within their reach for promoting that religion which is virtue's only solid basis,—for leading men of all orders and conditions to believe and feel themselves under the government of One, whose inspection they cannot elude, from whose tribunal they cannot withdraw, whose power is irresistible, and his wrath intolerable. The rights of conscience forbid the State taking anything to do with

religion? Why, that is just to say that the rights of conscience forbid the State taking anything to do with the chief and only solid basis of its own authority. I can conceive nothing more insulting to States, than the language which has of late been held by certain persons, that religion is a matter with which States have no right to intermeddle.

But now assuming that the State is not only entitled, but for its own sake bound to use every suitable means for promoting religion, the next question with a State convinced of this will of course be,—*by what means* religion shall through its instrumentality be most effectually promoted. Looking into God's Word, (for we have seen already that the State, as God's intelligent and responsible creature, is bound by the dictates of that word, in so far as they bear on its peculiar rights and duties,) it not only finds in general, that the very object of the Church's institution and preservation, is to promote religion, justice, sobriety and charity among men, but that, for the more effectual attaining of this end, Christ has established in the Church an order of men, for the express purpose of inculcating on mankind his heavenly doctrines and precepts. It is not possible that the State, being Christian, should fail to see in the ministers of the gospel the very men, who, from their sacred office, the promised blessing of Christ on their ministrations, their education, studies, character, and entire dedication to the work of religious instruction, are alone calculated fully to accomplish the great end which the

State would desire to promote. While it perceives, however, that in the work of religious culture and moral amelioration, the ministers of the gospel must be at least the grand agents, there are *two things* which cannot fail to impress themselves on an intelligent Government. The one is, that however liberal the members of the Church may be, and however great things may through their liberality be capable of being accomplished, yet, viewing the object to be attained as nothing less than the christian instruction of the whole population of the country, it were preposterous to expect the accomplishment of this, by means of mere private contributions. But the *second* thing is this, that it were the most palpable injustice on the part of the State, to calculate on the Church rendering it this greatest of all possible services, without furnishing her at least in part with the means for this purpose. It were in fact difficult to say, whether the State would be more ridiculous in expecting, or more unjust in asking the Church to accomplish such an object without its aid. In reply to any one objecting that the national aid was superfluous, it could not fail instantly to occur to an intelligent Government, first of all, that the presumption against this was so exceedingly strong, that the idea could only have arisen in the mind of one jealous on other grounds altogether, of its interference, and that nothing short of an absolute demonstration on the matter of fact could avail to set that presumption aside; and, in the second place, that even if the Church could with

some plausibility be supposed capable of both doing the whole work and bearing the whole burden, yet there could be no sort of reason why she *should*, but every possible reason, on the contrary, why the State should share it with her, the work to be accomplished being as much the State's as hers; that of all monies laid out for the public benefit, none could promise so rich a harvest of national prosperity and happiness as those placed in the Church's hands for the good of the country; and that, in fact, those who talked of the State doing nothing for religion, in order to save the national resources, might just as well talk of a man saving his resources by abstaining from food and starving himself. Be it still borne in mind, that the State would naturally perceive not only the absurdity of employing any kind of persecution to attach men to the Church, but the unjustifiableness of requiring her, in return for an endowment, to sacrifice any one right or liberty by Christ conferred upon her, since, in the first place, such sacrifice would be a dereliction of duty on her part, and in the second place, the endowment which alone could be supposed to justify the State in requiring it, could not fail of being more than repaid in benefits manifold and incalculable conferred upon her by the State.

And now I have just to repeat, with a slight alteration, the challenge given under the former head: supposing the State in point of fact to reason and act as I have here supposed, wherein would the State

in so doing overstep the limits of its duty? What is there in all that has been supposed, prejudicial to the independence of the Church? What, alien from the province of the State? What, implying persecution for conscience sake? What, that is not imperatively required at the hands of the State *towards its own subjects*, and towards God, its own creator and sovereign, in respect of them? I cannot help adding that if, as we formerly saw, the State would commit a violation of duty in not endowing the Church, for the sake of the Church herself, provided the endowment could be given without positive injury to the State, this first argument must now acquire tenfold strength, and that violation of duty must rise to an absolute contempt of the Church and of her God; since we have seen that, instead of being prejudicial to the interests of the State, the endowment is a matter of positive duty with a view to these very interests.

If we should suppose the State desirous of still further confirmation in this great duty, it would find it in the fact, that in the only Civil Polity ever established immediately by God, the support of the ministers of religion was not left dependant on the goodwill of the people, but was made the subject of express enactment, setting apart certain fixed revenues as their property. It is very true that this rule of Jewish law does not simply as such bind other nations: but since *the grounds* on which the rule proceeded can be shewn not to have been ceremonial, or in any way peculiarly Jewish, but to have been moral

and universal, applicable alike to the ministers of religion in every age, the case must on that account be held as indicating the divine will respecting this matter, not, indeed, in its details, but in its great leading principles. We find the Apostle Paul, in the 9th of 1st Corinthians, inferring by analogy from the Levitical institutions, the right of christian ministers to a due maintenance from some quarter or other. That the analogy extends to the placing of that maintenance on some such footing of law as shall ensure its sufficiency and its permanence, I affirm on this simple ground, that I can imagine no reason why the maintenance of Jewish, any more than of Christian ordinances should have been placed on a secure and permanent footing, nor any thing in the nature of Christian institutions, as distinguished from Jewish, which renders *their* maintenance independent of all other security than is found in the abilities and feelings of individuals.

Another confirmation of the great duty in question, the State might find in that interesting fact of Old Testament history, that on many occasions, with the most marked approbation of God, the rulers of heathen states did, without any special warrant from God, but simply from reverence for a religion which they could not but regard as somehow divine, contribute of the national property towards the support and extension of the Church,—an example this, which, while free from all peculiarities of theocracy, type, ceremony,

is surely applicable *a fortiori* to the case of a christian nation, ruled by christian governors.

The State might find the proof further augmented by various prophetic announcements of the condition of the Church under the gospel, where it is not foretold simply, but in triumphant strains sung, that the kings of the earth should not only in general act as nursing-fathers to the Church, but specially should pour silver and gold into her treasures, for the rearing and beautifying of that temple which the kings of other days had laboured to destroy.

In one word, the State, instead of finding all this proof shaken by the absence of an express command in the New Testament scriptures to endow the Church, would only regard its duty in the matter as further confirmed, *by the absence of a prohibition*. Let any one soberly reflect on the circumstances of the primitive Church, and he will easily perceive that, supposing it to have been the will of Christ that, when Christianity should have become the religion of the empire, it should receive the imperial support, an explicit command to this effect was not to be expected, and was not necessary to establish the duty. Let it be borne in mind that at the time the Apostles wrote, Christianity had not been embraced either by the emperor or the empire;—that without this it could not possibly obtain the national aid;—that any express injunctions which might in such circumstances have been given, could not fail, as the Church increased in numbers and influence, to prove highly dangerous to

her welfare, encouraging her members, on the one hand, from a natural desire to see their Master's will carried into effect, to employ measures inconsistent with their due subjection to the civil power, and furnishing the emperors, on the other, with an excellent plea to justify their jealousy and persecution of the Church;—that it was the Apostolic method, with reference to such duties (the abolition of slavery for example) as were much mixed up with existing civil institutions, instead of entering into details, to lay down general principles out of which the details would naturally be seen to flow, so soon as circumstances should admit of the duties being in the substance of them discharged;—that, as regards a national support of the Church, so soon as the State actually came into the requisite circumstances, the New Testament presented to its view such great principles as that in the 13th of Romans—“he is the minister of God to thee for good—” a principle from which the duty of the State to recognise and support the Church might by good and necessary consequence be inferred;—and, in a word, that the State had also before its eyes divinely approved examples of such support, in that part of Scripture where alone it could expect to find them, so that, before the presumption arising from these could be set aside, an express prohibition would have been requisite;—let these things be borne in mind, and it will be seen that, however the State might be confirmed in its duty to endow by the absence of a New Testament prohibi-

tion, it could in no degree be shaken by the absence of an explicit command.

Desirous as I have been to present an unbroken view of what appeared the chief points in the whole argument, there are two or three matters at which I have hitherto only glanced in passing, that seem to require a somewhat more special notice.

You may recollect that, in a former part of the Lecture, we supposed the State, on contemplating the Church of Christ, to find her a spiritual society, formed for spiritual ends, pursuing these by spiritual means, usurping no authority over empires, and claiming no control over the persons and properties of men; and that from all this we supposed the State to conclude that, instead of having any occasion to be jealous of the Church, the latter might prove, on the contrary, highly instrumental in promoting the peculiar ends of civil government. Now what I am desirous to fix your attention upon here is this, that that very *spirituality* of the Church which our opponents boast as their fundamental argument, so far from rendering her unfit to receive aid from the State, is in reality one of the chief things which fit her for obtaining it. Put the case for a moment that the Church were *not* a spiritual society, but claimed control over property, for example, and a right to employ the sword for accomplishing her ends. It is manifest that in that case, in the first place she could have *no need* of the national aid, having assumed to herself national powers,

and in the second place, that she would thus just constitute with respect to the State an *imperium in imperio*, meriting both the jealousy and hostility of the State. But since the Church is of a different nature altogether, having in view spiritual ends, and claiming no right to pursue these by other than spiritual means, the way is thus opened up for a friendly and harmonious cooperation between her and the State, for the accomplishing of their respective objects, which objects, though different indeed, are so far, you will observe, from being contrary or discordant, that as the State cannot but always by good government benefit the Church, so the Church, in the very act of following out her spiritual vocation, cannot but contribute to the welfare of the State.

But you may further recollect, that we supposed the State, finding the Church in the enjoyment of certain spiritual rights and liberties, to perceive the utter unjustifiableness of requiring her to purchase the national aid by the sacrifice of these ; both because that aid could not fail of being fully compensated in benefits returned by her to the nation, and because the State could never, consistently with its own duty to God, require the Church to betray her Lord by the sacrifice of her rights. Now this is what I would entreat you to mark here—that, so far is it from being true, as our Opponents universally, and some too of our ill informed friends tell us, that the State, endowing the Church, ought in return to have a share of her liberties,—the right, for example, of appointing

her ministers,—that, on the contrary, the very same duty to God which we have seen obliging the State to endow the Church, manifestly forbids its touching even the least of her scriptural, divinely bestowed rights; not to say besides, that the very notion of a boon requiring a sacrifice in return is utterly groundless; the endowment being not only matter of duty, but far more than repaid by the Church in the spiritual, intellectual, moral and political improvement of the country by her means.

I have only to recall your attention to one other point. In reply to any one objecting that, for the work of conveying christian instruction to the whole population of the country, the national aid was superfluous,—that the Church could of herself both do the whole work and bear the whole pecuniary burden, we supposed, you may remember, that it could not fail instantly to occur to an intelligent Government, not only that there was no sort of reason why the Church should bear the whole burden of a work as much the State's as hers, *but* that the presumption against the objector's statement of fact was so exceedingly strong, that the idea could only have arisen in the mind of one *jealous on other grounds*, of the State's interfering at all; and that to set aside that presumption nothing could suffice, short of an absolute demonstration by the objector on the matter of fact. I pray you to mark this last point. By far the most plausible objection which I can conceive an intelligent opponent making to the whole previous argument, is this that

we have throughout *assumed*, that the aid of the State is necessary, whereas this is denied, and we ourselves seem to admit that it requires proof, by offering in our Prospectus to prove it in subsequent Lectures. That we have assumed this, I admit, and shall now frankly state what I consider the exact bearing of the assumption on the force of the entire argument. Supposing it, then, to be conceded, that the object which the State ought to have in view is nothing less than the christian instruction of the entire population of the country, I hold that there is on the face of the matter so manifest and so strong a presumption against even the possibility of accomplishing the half of this object, much more the certainty of accomplishing the whole, by means of unaided private efforts, that no man of sense could ever have affirmed it possible, had he not beforehand, and on separate grounds altogether, conceived the strongest *aversion to the State lending its aid, however necessary that aid might be*. So soon, therefore, as we have found that there is not only no reason, *in point of principle*, to be averse to the State lending its aid, but that there is every thing in point of principle to justify and demand it, then are we not only entitled to assume, but bound to hold that the national aid is *not* superfluous, until the objector present a demonstration that it is, strong enough to set aside the whole force at once of the presumption, and of all the principles. In short our opinion is, that the whole Establishment question is on our part, properly at this point closed ; and that we might now bid fare-

well to our Opponents, hoping to see them in that character no more, at all events until furnished with their perfectly full and clear demonstration, in point of fact, that the national aid is absolutely useless, and that the State may confidently reckon on the whole work of christian instruction being performed by means of private contributions alone. At the same time we feel so full a persuasion, that the facts of the case are in perfect accordance with its principles and presumptions, that we have therefore offered, ourselves to take up the question of fact or expediency.

And now, if the foregoing line of argument has been successfully followed out, you will perceive that there is no need of any separate discussion of that second department of our subject,—the Duty of the Church to accept the National Endowment. The duty of the Church to *accept*, is correlative to, necessarily arises out of, and rests on substantially the same grounds with the duty of the State to *offer*. Of course we mean not that the one party either must or may accept, on any terms on which the other may please to offer. We have already seen that the State is bound to propose no terms incompatible with the Church's scriptural rights and liberties : and if in any instance, influenced by mistaken views of national interest, and regardless of its duty to God and to his Church, the State should clog its endowment with conditions fatal to her liberties, then is it hers, in the discharge of that first of duties, allegiance to her Divine Head, to decline the national proposals. It is sufficiently evident

on the other hand, that the Church would not be justified in declining,—simply because the endowment could not be secured in all respects on the very best footing. If with her utmost exertions, she cannot accomplish this, and yet be satisfied that, all things taken together, she can accept, consistently with duty to her Head, then she owes it to Herself, to the State, to God, so to do, resolving of course at the same time, that she will leave no due means unemployed, for obtaining whatever change on the constitution of the endowment it may seem to require.

THE END.

LECTURE V.

ON THE ADVANTAGES WHICH THE CHURCH DERIVES FROM AN ALLIANCE WITH THE STATE, &c.

FOR the right understanding of this evening's argument, concerning the principle of Church Establishments, it is of consequence that you should remember the place which it holds in the systematic discussion of the question, according to the plan, or course, of these Lectures. I desire you to observe the point at which we have now arrived, and from which I set out. I am to assume, as already proved, *1st*, That the Church and the State are two diverse and independent associations of men, constituted on different principles, and for different immediate objects, yet capable of alliance, for mutual support and co-operation; *2d*, That there is nothing in the nature of either to hinder them from treating of an alliance such as is

implied in the Civil Establishment of Religion, but rather, 3d, That there is an obvious propriety and duty in their treating of such an alliance, since they have the same origin, and ultimately the same end,—both being equally ordinances of God, appointed for his own glory and the good of man. The State, in particular, is both entitled and required, from a regard to the Church as a kindred ordinance of God, and from a regard also to its own interests, to do something, if possible, for the Church. The only question is: What can the State do, with advantage to the Church and to itself? Is the union of Church and State advantageous to either, or to both? Is it advantageous, first of all, to the Church, as a religious society? And how? We are to prove that it *is*, in several ways; and I am now to consider one thing certainly advantageous to the Church, which the State can do, in securing decent respect and reverence to her institutions.

I frankly admit that there is some ground for jealousy of all legislative interference in religious matters, on account of the abuses to which such interference has led. Thoughtful men, impressed with a deep horror of the falsehood, fanaticism, persecution, illiberal and exclusive bigotry, and other evils attendant on a rash exercise of civil power, about sacred things, have been tempted to recommend an entire renunciation of such power altogether; believing that religion will flourish best if let alone, and that the interference of the State is apt to do more harm than good. But

thus to argue from an acknowledged abuse of a principle, against the principle itself, is either injustice or prejudice. It by no means follows that because injudicious legislation, whether in civil or in sacred things, is mischievous,—there may not be legislation regulated by such sound views of moderation and practical good sense as to be safe and salutary. To touch the ark with rude unhallowed hand may provoke the punishment of presumption and impiety, while yet, to make way for its triumphant progress, and to provide for its secure and honourable reception, and to defend it from profane and violent attacks, this may be accepted and acknowledged as good service, and as such, rewarded with a blessing.

Now the Church, as the ark of God, has in keeping his holy *name*, and sets in order his *worship*, and demands, for that purpose, his *day* of sacred rest. And in this, the proper office of the Church, the State can render some assistance, in the way of securing the decent respect and reverence of its subjects to the name of God, the worship of God, the day of God. In regard to each of these three sacred matters I shall attempt to show, *1st*, That the State may legitimately interfere; *2d*, That, if it do so at all, it must be not merely on civil, but on strictly religious considerations; and *3d*, That its interference is of advantage to the Church, as having more directly the care of such things. I shall thus meet three classes of objectors; *1st*, Those who say that the civil magistrate has no business with the matters of the first table of the law at all,—the name,

the worship, and the Sabbath of the Lord; 2*d*, Those who say, that they may indeed occasionally fall within his province, but only as involving civil questions; and 3*d*, Those who say, that by legislating in any way on the subject, he injures the very cause that he intends to promote.

I. The really devout hallowing of the name of God cannot, of course, be immediately secured by any civil legislation, either protective or penal. No man can be bribed or forced truly and religiously to reverence God, as he is made known in his Word. The arguments and motives of that Word itself are the only means of gaining so desirable an end; and these are the weapons which the Church is appointed to wield. Out of the Scriptures of Truth she is to teach, exhort, persuade, reprove, rebuke, warn all men, that they may know God, and knowing, may fear and love his name. But is there nothing which the civil magistrate can do, in the use of his proper instruments, to aid the Church in this work, and, at least, indirectly to promote this object? Will not, for instance, his endowing the Church, his providing for the religious instruction of the people, very obviously tend to diffuse right apprehensions of God, and consequently, right sentiments of esteem for all that is his? Or, apart from that method of advancing the honour of God's name, which does not fall properly within my department, the magistrate, at least, has the power of directly and immediately interposing his authority

to prevent the scandal and contagion of notorious blasphemy, and to encourage an external decency and decorum of speech and manners, in regard to all matters relating to the character of the Supreme Being. And having unquestionably the *power*, I remark,

1. That he has also the *right* to do so. It is competent for every Government, without transgressing the just and legitimate limits of its jurisdiction, or tyrannically infringing on liberty, to make this a subject of statutory enactment—of penal legislation. I am aware that this is a right which needs always to be very cautiously circumscribed, that it may not encroach on the liberty of thought and speech, the right of private judgment and free discussion; and I am not prepared to defend the existing laws of this or any country, regarding blasphemy, or even abstractly and theoretically to determine the precise extent to which this prerogative of the civil ruler may be stretched. I hold, however, that he *has* that prerogative, and that he *may* exercise it; that, acknowledging himself the name of God as holy, he may take order to prevent its gross profanation among his subjects, and that too, without anything that can be fairly called persecution. But what, you say, is blasphemy? Speaking evil of God—uttering things dishonourable to his name and character? Well, and who is to judge what is blasphemous? The Legislature, the magistrate? And his own views of God must be the standard of appeal? And opinions different from his own will appear to him profane? And he will be entitled to prevent or

punish their propagation? And does not this look very like giving him a right to persecute, to inflict civil pains and penalties for speculative errors? *No, you say, I am an advocate for universal toleration.* Why, so am I; nay, I dislike the very term toleration, because it does not seem sufficiently to recognise my privilege. I claim entire freedom of enquiry, and I do so in regard to matters civil as well as sacred. No authority in the Church or State can be paramount to my own conscience. I have a right to think for myself, to hold my own opinions on all subjects of human knowledge, political as well as religious; I have a right to avow them, nay, I am bound to avow them; and the State is bound to tolerate my avowal of them, be they ever so heretical. And, mark this, it is equally bound to tolerate my political with my religious heresies, and conversely not more bound to tolerate my religious than my political;—no, not one jot farther. And yet in political opinions every one sees there must be a limit to this liberty, and that without implying intolerance or persecution. As a politician, I may maintain the most wild and visionary views of civil government,—views most opposed to the Constitution under which I live, and if acted upon, entirely subversive of all its forms, nay, in theory, inconsistent with any conceivable settled policy at all; I may hold republican sentiments, or despotic, or fifth-monarchical; I may be an anarchist in principle, an enemy of all law, an admirer of the state of nature, its naked dignity and savage virtues; and I may give my dreams

to the world, as a new Fable of the Bees, or the old Idea of a perfect Commonwealth ; and I may claim the sufferance and protection of the State, notwithstanding, even though I be labouring with all my might to effect a change in her laws, agreeable to my own whims and fancies ; and I make this claim very much on the same grounds on which I claim freedom of religious sentiment, the independence of private judgment, and the conscious and acknowledged fallibility of all human authority. There being no certainly unerring oracle among men on these subjects, each is entitled to use his own reason, and it is right that all should be permitted and encouraged to judge for themselves, that the truth may be brought fully out, in politics, and in religion. But then, in politics, and in my political discussions, there is plainly a limit, which, if I overstep, so as to become inflammatory or insurrectionary, or abusive and contumelious, I forfeit my right of protection, and incur the censure, even of the most tolerant government ; for there is such a thing as treason or sedition, justly obnoxious to penal law. And so too in religious discussion, there may surely, on the very same principle, be a limit to private liberty, without any fair charge or impeachment of persecution against the State. I do not state these two cases of political and religious crimes as exactly in all respects similar, neither do I pretend to fix in either case, the precise point of warrantable and necessary interference with alleged liberty of prophesying. My argument is simply this,—as in matters relating to

civil polity, the State plainly has a discretionary power of preventing treasonable or seditious libels or attacks upon its own credit, a power which it is bound to exercise with great prudence and forbearance, but which yet it may, in entire consistency with the freest toleration, exercise in the last resort; even so it cannot be regarded as any infringement of that religious liberty which the State should secure alike to all, that it reserves to itself the right of proceeding, if it be found necessary or expedient, even penally, against those outrageous insults on every thing sacred among men which defy all the decencies of earth, and challenge the signal wrath of Heaven.

The truth is, this claim of free discussion on the part of the subject, and the duty of toleration on the part of the ruler, seem to rest together on a sort of mutual compact, or tacit understanding, wherein each party being conscious of his own fallibility, and recognising the natural or established rights of the other, a compromise, in some sense, takes place, on the footing of reciprocal forbearance and respect, so that the ruler is not more bound to show all reasonable indulgence to the private judgment of the subject, than the subject is bound to abstain from insulting and outraging that sacred name, which both ruler and subject are required reverently to acknowledge. The privilege of the subject is not unlimited or unconditional; and though it is the duty of the ruler to allow, nay, to invite, free discussion, as friendly to the cause of truth, it is, and must be, his prerogative, to restrain, and even ultimately to resent

the scandalous abuse of that freedom, for impious or factious ends. The civil magistrate, then, is warranted in taking cognizance of blasphemy—

2. And that too, as an offence against God and godliness ; for there are some who hold it to be the right and duty of the State to make laws against certain kinds of profanity ; but then, to save their favourite principle of its non-interference in religious matters, they tell us, that it is to do so, purely on civil grounds and considerations of political expediency. The magistrate is to repress insolent blasphemy. Oh, but he is to beware of viewing it as a crime against heaven, or having the least regard, in the measures which he takes against it, to the authority of God, and the honour of his great and terrible name. Oh, by no means. He is to look upon it merely as an offence against man, as tending to disturb the peace and good order of society. But is there not something very like a fallacy here ? A confounding of two things quite distinct ;—the formal reason of the civil magistrate's jurisdiction, in all matters alike ; and the special subject of that jurisdiction in each different case ? The question is not, on what grounds the magistrate is entitled to legislate against crime at all, but simply, what sort of crimes they are against which he is entitled to legislate ;—not in what capacity he rules at all, but what things they are that fall under his rule. It is admitted that he acts, in the case before us, as the guardian of peace and good order. And so he does in all cases. This is the trust committed to him. But then, in the dis-

charge of this trust, he has affairs of all different sorts to order, and laws of different kinds, religious, moral, civil, and political, to make and enforce, and it is mere refinement to confound all these together, under one sweeping rule of expediency. In truth, the State is not left to its own arbitrary discretion, in its public capacity, to act on the mere general principle of expediency, as the guardian of social peace, any more than the individual, in his private capacity, is left to this single principle of expediency, as the guardian of his own virtue. There are distinct principles and laws of religion, and morality, and social justice, given to both the State and the individual, which simply in themselves, and on their own account, they are severally, in their respective capacities, bound to observe; so that offences against religion, against morality, against civil policy, come, simply and separately as such, beneath the cognizance of the private judgment of the individual, and the public authority of the State.

This notion, indeed, of the civil magistrate taking account of religious offences, not as what they truly are, but as something else, does seem strangely unreasonable—a sophism scarcely to be accounted for, except by considering how hardly its supporters are pressed, to evade our natural inference from their acknowledgment, however reluctant, of the State's right of interference about sacred things. Let us just put a few plain questions to these persons, who would resolve blasphemy, in so far as its liability to civil judg-

ment is concerned, into a mere political offence. *1st*, How, as such, can it have any existence at all, in the eyes of any man or body of men? What is its tangible form? How is it to be known, and grasped, and held fast? How can any kind of hostility to religion be recognised, except in so far as religion itself is recognised? If there be no God, there can be no blasphemy; and if the civil magistrate, in his political capacity, does not acknowledge God as an object of reverence, he can know nothing about blasphemy as an object of censure. There will, so far as the State is concerned, be no such thing at all, having a local habitation or a name. The very body of the crime, attenuated by much handling, to make it fit into a system, has become more and more rare and subtle, and is at last vanished into thin air altogether. Oh but, says one, this scurrilous impiety is not only insulting to God, but an offence and scandal to all good men, and, as such, it ought to be prevented. *2d*, Very well; but if it be a wrong to any men, it must be so to them as religious beings, as persons having a reverence for the name of God; for in that capacity alone, can they be shocked or injured by blasphemy against that name. For, whose fault is it that offence is taken? Not the blasphemer's, unless it be admitted that the people have a right to be offended, that blasphemy is a wrong that may be resented, from a regard to feelings altogether religious. So then, after all, the State is entitled to recognise, nay, is bound to respect the purely religious scruples of its subjects, and

may warrantably acknowledge religion as held by them, and interfere, even penally, to prevent a flagrant outrage upon it. Nay, says another, I would not be so very tender, merely to the squeamish delicacy of those whose fine feelings may be hurt by rude language ; my reason for repressing blasphemy, is because of the substantial injury it does in unhinging the minds of the people, unsettling their moral principles, and so rendering life, and character, and property insecure. 3. True, it does all that mischief and more ; but it does so by its hostility to religion, because, in its contagious and deadly progress, it blights and blasts in the public mind all reverence for things sacred, so that, ceasing to fear God, the people, in all probability, will cease to regard man. And does not this prove, that merely in self-defence, for its own preservation from lawless violence, the State is compelled to take measures for securing the due and decent respect of the name of God, and to proceed against gross blasphemy, as a religious offence, in its own proper character, and by its own nature and tendencies, as a religious offence, destructive of the very being of society. Still, therefore, it is strictly and exclusively in the light of a religious offence, that the State must regard it as so detestable and intolerable ; and so, on the whole, we conclude, that it is really in a religious matter and upon religious grounds and considerations, that the State interposes its authority, when it takes order that the name of God be not shamefully and profligately profaned. And now,

3. Is it not of advantage to the Church, in her endeavours to promote the true inward and spiritual hallowing of God's name, that the State should thus interfere, or should have the right of interfering? The arm of civil power cannot, indeed, directly promote the reverence of things sacred in the minds of men, but it can enforce an external decorum highly favourable to the success of religious means and motives, and it can remove those outrageous scandals and seductions which hinder the advance of real and genuine piety. And this surely is a great point gained to religion, this facility of plying her own proper weapons of persuasion, and meeting opposite influences on fair terms, without that unequal advantage which the Infidel and Atheist would otherwise have; for, if allowed unbounded licence, they have an unfair advantage, in indulging that daring and unscrupulous irreverence, that reckless defiance of appeal, not to the reason, but to the worst and vilest passions of men, which is an instrument of tremendous power for evil over the corrupted heart, and which the very scepticism of *their* principles puts in *their* hands alone. True, it is always a question for grave consideration, even in cases of the most outrageous and offensive blasphemy, how far the interference of the State may not, by giving publicity to the offence, and exciting an interest in the offender, spread, rather than arrest, the evil. Interference, even when quite legitimate, may be injudicious,—it may be quite lawful but not expedient. Still it is good that the State has the right to

interfere, and it can scarcely be denied, that in many, even recent instances, the prompt and vigorous application of civil power to suppress some of those moral nuisances, those nests of impiety, with which the great metropolis of Britain too much abounds, has been attended with beneficial results. And then, again, without resorting to penal severity, there are milder measures by which blasphemy may be discouraged and discountenanced. Above all, there is the direct recommendation of external piety, which the Government may give, and the example of decent reverence for the name of God, which it may set. There may be a becoming acknowledgment of that sacred name, on all fitting occasions, in the official proceedings of the Legislature, and the public deeds and documents of the State; and, in general, there may be interwoven in the very frame and texture of the Constitution, as happily, through the wisdom of our pious Fathers, there is still preeminently in our's,—which, for that reason among others, may God long preserve,—so clear and decided and distinct a recognition of the Supreme Being, so marked and emphatic a disavowal and condemnation of all impiety, as may go far to leaven the general mass of the population with a decorous sense of religious fear, to raise the tone and standard of devout feeling, and to infuse a strong abhorrence of all wilful and wanton ungodliness into the minds of men;—enlisting in the cause of religious decency and order, that public opinion, which is, after all, a stronger restraint than all law.

II. The *worship* of God is that by which, in the Church, his *Name* is hallowed. And to the worship of God also, the State can do something for securing decent respect and reverence. It can countenance Christians in their religious assemblies.

1. The State may not, indeed, legitimately interfere to regulate the internal order of these assemblies, or to enforce attendance upon them. Its interference must be purely defensive. The magistrate may not intrude himself into the proceedings of the Church, and under pretence, or with the design, of promoting decency of worship, alter or amend the forms observed to suit his own fancy. This would be an unwarrantable encroachment upon the independence of the Church, and an overstepping of the limits of his own proper province. He may be convinced in his own mind, that the mode of worship followed is in many things neither decent nor reverent,—deformed by a cumbrous and complicated ceremonial, or, on the other hand, so blunt and bald and naked in its simplicity, as almost to have the character of unbecoming rudeness. But much as he may desire its reformation, he may not himself legitimately attempt to reform it, having neither the requisite qualification for such a work, nor any competent commission. The entire ordering of the worship of God belongs to the Church alone. The maintaining of the Church's order, is all the service that the State can fairly render. Again, the State has no right to compel men to worship God according to any particular form, or to worship him at all. It can merely pro-

tect and encourage its subjects in doing so. The attempt to enforce the worship of God by civil pains and penalties, or to recommend it by annexing civil benefits and bounties, is equally vain and unjustifiable. It is vain, as seeking an end unattainable by such means, which can suffice only to make men hypocrites, not to make them devout. It is unjustifiable, being an employment of the public authority inconsistent with the liberty of private judgment and the spirit of religious toleration. Thus much, however, the magistrate certainly can do, without violating any right, without transgressing the bounds of his own jurisdiction,—he may address himself expressly to the business of securing to the Church the full and undisturbed power of quietly and peacefully and prosperously worshipping God, under her own vine and her own fig-tree, none daring to annoy or to make her afraid.

2. But is this properly a *religious* interference? Is it any special or peculiar favour to religion as such, —to the Church as a religious society? The Church, it is said, may claim the very same protection with other societies, and no more, and that too, merely on the same general principle, that every society, in its assemblies for lawful and peaceable objects, is entitled to expect the countenance of the State, and to demand its interference, even by force, if necessary, to secure for these assemblies uninterrupted tranquillity. But it may well be doubted how far this degree of protection is sufficient for Christianity. According to this view, the magistrate is supposed to be entirely impartial, no

way biassed in favour of the Christian Church, nor at all disposed to stretch his prerogative on behalf of her preachers and their religious assemblies, one inch beyond its usual exercise, in the case of other associations. Now, we are to remember always the offensive character which Christianity, as a religious system, bears. It assails men in the very stronghold of their prejudices and passions. Truly did its Founder declare, that he came not to send peace on earth,—but a sword; and not less truly was it said of its early teachers, that they were turning the world upside down. Unlike the innumerable varieties of Polytheism, each of which was quite compatible with all the rest, the Christian faith is exclusive, and, in a moral sense, intolerant. The publication of it must, therefore, be regarded as having some tendency to provoke the hostility of unenlightened men, to excite violent rage and opposition, to act as a firebrand in society. It is no improbable supposition, that the zeal of the preachers of righteousness, in itself most pure and peaceable, might yet, through the offence which the truth may give, cause an excitement inconsistent with their own personal security and the quiet conducting of their worship. The supposition has been realised. Now, in such an event, we may well ask how far any government, acting upon the principle of entire neutrality, either would, or could go, in defending such religious teachers, and procuring a fair hearing for their doctrine? The question may fairly arise in regard to any breach of the peace, any tumult, or threatening of tumult,

Who are really to be blamed? And how far is it really the duty of the Government to protect, at all hazards, the promoters of so obnoxious a system against the natural consequences of their own rashness, and not rather by persuasion, if possible, and even, if necessary, by force, to remove them away from the scene of danger, which their own inflammatory harangues have rendered too hot for them? And so the faithful preaching of the Cross of Christ might be suppressed, in deference to the feelings of the offended and incensed multitude. And on the principle of the civil magistrate's absolute indifference about religion, it would be exceedingly difficult to prove either the impolicy or the injustice of such a mode of settling the case. For always, in every interruption of the peace occurring, or likely to occur, through the contest of opposing parties, the magistrate, if he act merely on principles of civil policy, is entitled to consider what are the most probable means of securing quiet,—which party is the most offensive and troublesome and pertinacious,—and by his plenary power, in any emergency, to adopt very summary, and even arbitrary steps, to prevent any provocation that may appear to be needlessly and wantonly given. It is only on the supposition, of civil rulers being entitled to act upon and to avow the principle of acknowledging and *favouring* the Christian Church, that they can be fully and clearly justified in exerting their power to the utmost to *defend* her assemblies, her preaching, her ordinances, however unwelcome and however unpala-

table. This then is my argument, that unless the State decidedly recognises the *faith*, it will scarcely protect the *worship* of the Church ; indeed, it can scarcely be reasonably asked or expected in all cases to do so ; nor does the Word of God any where claim or challenge for his ministers, the protection of magistrates in publishing the truth, on any other footing than that of a previous claim on these very magistrates for the acknowledgment of the truth itself. It was not mere human right, but Divine authority, that Christ pleaded before the Roman Governor. It was as the *witness* of the *truth* of God, that he demanded the interposition in his defence of the civil power which God gave or ordained. *

3. The force of this argument, as proving the advantage to the Church, of the State's concerning itself about religion, is not, in these days, fully felt. Respect for public worship is so well secured every where by public opinion, as to seem quite independent of any favour or friendship that the State may show to the Church ; so that very many who hold that the Church

* John xviii. 37, and xix. 11.—What is the scriptural argument, or authority, that gives the Church a right to toleration,—to protection at the hands of kings and rulers? Certainly there is some such argument or authority ; yet, is there any that does not involve and proceed upon the higher right of the Church, and the Head of the Church, to be acknowledged and respected and aided by these same kings and rulers, and in the very same capacity too,—their public and official character *as* kings and rulers ?

may well dispense with every thing like positive encouragement on the part of the State, do yet quietly and unconsciously proceed upon the silent assumption, that at all events, as a matter of course, whether recognised or not by the State, the Church shall be entitled to the countenance of the civil power in all her proceedings. But the case may be conceived,—it has occurred in the history of Missionary labours, as for instance in the South Sea Islands,—the case of an attempt to convert the Heathen. There, the difficulty of obtaining a fair hearing under the mere neutrality of the ruler is practically felt, and the advantage of his decision in favour of Christianity is gratefully acknowledged by its preachers, not for their own sake, but for the sake of the cause which is dearer to them than their lives. The history, too, of the early times of the Church, when persecution arose chiefly from popular violence which governments would not check, or checked only by the obvious expedient of political sagacity, the prevention or removal of what occasioned it,—this sufficiently proves how little chance the Church has of obtaining due protection to her worship, without a distinct recognition of her heavenly authority and claims. In her nocturnal assemblies, the brief and rare meetings of her children in caves and dens, and under cloud of darkness, when no Government was sufficiently friendly to protect her worship against tumult and riot in open day, we see enough to make us value the privilege which she now enjoys under the avowed favour of the Christian magistrate.

And even in our own land and in our own day, how should we like to see all the peculiar sanctity of religious meetings, the violation of which is regarded as a signal and special crime, abrogated and annulled, and our Churches put on the same footing with Theatres and Dancing-halls, and an insult offered to the public worship of God, viewed in no more serious light, and treated as no graver offence than the disturbance of a festive entertainment by an unruly and riotous brawl? Yet all this necessarily follows from the principle, that the State has no business with religious societies more than with any other lawful associations of its subjects. Surely, surely, even our dissenting brethren will admit, that there *is* an advantage to religion in this increased security of religious worship, as a thing acknowledged to be peculiarly venerable and sacred. It is a positive advantage which they share along with us,—an advantage resulting, obviously and directly, from the positive recognition of religion by the civil magistrate, and his avowed interference about religious worship, expressly as a Divine institution, the maintenance of which is even more emphatically and pre-eminently his duty, than the defence of any ordinary avocation or amusement of civil and social life.

But the State can do more in this matter for the advantage of the Church, or rather of religion through the Church. The magistrate, by his own attendance on Divine worship, and by admitting that worship as an integral and essential part of his official proceedings, renders to it a fair and fitting homage himself, and

practically recommends it to his subjects. Some may be inclined here to sneer, and taunt us with desiring the countenance of the great and lordly, and paying our court in high places, wishing to see heritors and magistrates in our front galleries, and to be invited to conduct worship in the Royal presence, or in Halls of State. But notwithstanding such sarcasm, we still hold, that the Church has cause to rejoice, not so much for her own sake, as for the sake of the country, the people, when Christian magistrates, not only personally, as private individuals, but in their official capacity, and in connection with their official acts, wait on the ministry of Christian pastors,—wait rather upon Him whose ministers and servants, both magistrates and pastors equally are. True, there may be much formality in such public and official religion, as there is much formality in that which is most private and personal. Yet it is good that there should be even the form, for then there may always be ground of prayer and hope that the spirit may be there also. And if the civil ruler go one step farther, and if besides thus in his official capacity and station, giving his countenance and sanction to religious worship, and so by the indirect influence of his authority and example, promoting the decent respect and reverence of that Divine Institution,—if he aim more directly at the same end, not by compelling any to attend upon the worship of God, but by giving to all the opportunity of attending, by building churches and providing ministers, and so putting that worship in the way of those

who cannot afford to procure it themselves, or who will not take the trouble of seeking it,—Who shall prove that this is not a decided and substantial benefit to religion, rightly and legitimately flowing from the State's recognising it as such, and favouring and fostering it? But I am trenching upon the department of my successor.

III. One thing, however, it falls to me to remark, the State can do towards securing reverence to the worship of God, and one advantage more, therefore, it can confer upon religion. It can secure to all its subjects that weekly *day of rest* for the worship of God, which God himself intended, and has ordained that all should have.

1. For determining to what extent the State may legitimately interfere in regard to the Sabbath, two necessary limitations are to be made:—

(1st,) The *religious* observance of the Sabbath, is admitted to be a duty which the State may not even attempt to enforce. The only object which a human legislature can and ought to have in view, is to suppress flagrant violations of the Sabbatic rest, and to secure to every individual the full liberty of obeying the Divine commandment, without risk or prejudice to his worldly interests. The Sabbath may be considered in two distinct lights,—as a day of rest, and as a day of *sacred* rest,—a day of rest *from* the secular affairs of life,—a day of rest *for* the worship of God. Now it is solely, and exclusively, in the former of

these lights that the Sabbath can be regarded as a fair subject of legislative enactment. Here, therefore, as in the former instances of the name and the worship of God, the interference of the State must be for the purpose, not of compulsory enforcement, but simply of protection and encouragement. Such is the *end* which the civil authority must have in view,—an end which may surely be aimed at without the imputation of tyranny or persecution, without any infringement on the rights of conscience, or the most entire freedom of thought and action in religious matters. No man can be forced to keep the Sabbath holy to the Lord. But all may be fairly required to keep it as a day that *may* be holy to the Lord.

(2*d*,) Again, as to the method of attaining this end. The only power which the State can legitimately use for this purpose, is the power of a public police. Any thing approaching to a private and domiciliary inquiry, is to be reprobated as an intolerable encroachment upon liberty. Every man's house is his castle, as well on the Sabbath as on other days: And the State has no right, under pretence of enforcing the observance of the Sabbath, to violate the sanctity, or abridge the freedom of domestic life. All that can be done is to put a stop to public labour and public traffic. Beyond this limit the State cannot go. It cannot justly interfere with individuals in the disposal of their private resources. A man may conduct his business and indulge his pleasure, privately, as an individual, and so long as he gives no disturbance to the

public rest, he is not himself to be disturbed. It is only when he comes out from his retirement, to transact business and minister to pleasure, publicly, and avowedly in the character of a servant of the public, that he can be fairly checked and restrained. We can compel shops and counting-houses and chambers to be shut, and prevent the occupants from serving customers and receiving clients, in the way of public merchandise and the open settlement of affairs between man and man ; but we cannot follow them into their own closets, and force them to close the order-book or the account-book, which they may be taking the opportunity of a day's leisure to adjust. We may fairly insist on the stopping of public works, and hinder the masters from tempting, or compelling, the workmen to labour. But we cannot take cognisance of the labour which, in their own houses, the master and workmen may quietly and secretly carry on. We may order all public places of entertainment to suspend their dealings. But we cannot force an entrance into private dwellings, or pry into the ways in which, without annoyance to the public rest, men may there be entertaining themselves and their friends. We may prohibit public travelling. We may lay an embargo on those vehicles which serve or accommodate the public for hire. But we cannot well prevent individuals from using peaceably the resources privately within their reach, for the purpose of travelling, or for any other purpose not inconsistent with public order. We do not plead for a system of espionage, of private and

personal inquisition. We want not the "*gens d'armes*" of an arbitrary government to spy out the secrets of our homes and hearths, or to interfere with us impertinently in the use of our private means. We want only such regulations, relative to *public* transactions, as the police of a free State may enforce, without at all encroaching on the personal freedom of its subjects.

And this is the explanation of what some frivolous and shallow declaimers have made an objection against all Sabbath legislation,—the alleged inequality of its pressure on the different ranks and classes of society. The restraints imposed are said to fall heavily upon the poor, while they are little felt by the rich, and this is magnified into a grievous hardship and injustice. The rich, who have plenty of resources privately within their reach, may well submit to the abridgement of the public means of occupation and entertainment; but that the poor, destitute of comforts and luxuries at home, should be debarred all access to the provision made for their accommodation abroad, this is unfair, unequal, intolerably cruel. It is nothing to the man who has a sumptuous table in his hall, and a splendid equipage at his door, it is no loss or inconvenience to him that the public-houses are shut, and the public coaches stopped; but why should those who have but a scanty board to cheer them, and only their own toil-worn limbs to carry them, why should they be deprived of the only substitutes which they can afford to have for the luxuries which wealth confers? Now,

apart from the consideration of the advantage to the poor themselves of these arrangements, there is another obvious answer to this charge of partiality to the rich. The inequality of pressure complained of in the Sabbath law, is nothing more than what is necessarily incident to every police regulation in a free State, which, while it, to a certain extent, diminishes the public facilities of business and pleasure, leaves untouched and unaffected all private means and resources. For, as these means and resources belong in greater abundance to the rich than to the poor, originally and independently of any police regulation, it is quite plain, that under every such regulation the rich must, of necessity, have an advantage in point of convenience and superior accommodation. But then, this advantage is properly to be ascribed, not to any inequality in the pressure of the police regulation, but to the original inequality in the resources of those upon whom the regulation presses. The objection, if of any force at all, applies not to the unequal restraints imposed by the law, but to the unequal distribution of the gifts of Providence. For, supposing the restraints to fall in the fairest and most equal proportion on both classes, yet, as at the first, the conveniences within the reach of the rich exceed those of the poor, these conveniences being diminished in equal ratio, there must still be an inequality between the remaining conveniences of the rich and the poor. This is plain to demonstration. Let two unequal magnitudes, or quantities, be diminished in exact proportion to one

another, the remainders will still be unequal. But this inequality in the remainders is obviously the consequence, not of the equal and proportional diminution, but of the originally unequal amount of the two magnitudes or quantities in question. It is altogether unreasonable therefore, it is false to say, that Sabbath legislation is unequal in its application to the rich and to the poor, because under the restraints imposed, the rich enjoy larger accommodations than the poor. Instead of proving the inequality of these restraints, this may rather be urged as an argument of their entire equality: since it is nothing more than what should be expected and calculated upon, on the supposition of the most exact analogy and proportion being observed. Sabbath legislation stands, in this respect, exactly on the same footing with any other regulations of ordinary police discipline, as for instance, the laws against nocturnal riot and dissipation. These laws are, of course, less felt by the rich, who have the means of dissipation in sufficient abundance at home and in private, than they are by the poor, who, if they are to indulge in society at all, can do so only in public places of resort. Yet who would argue on this account against the laws in question, as if they were unequal in their pressure and application? They are, in fact, quite equal. They diminish in exactly the same proportion, the facilities of enjoyment of the rich and the poor. For the rich have larger means of public, as well as private, accommodation than the poor, and when the public means of accommodation are stopped, both classes are propor-

tionally affected; though still, from the original and natural disproportion of their resources, the private means remaining free and open, the rich have the superiority, just as the greater number diminished in equal ratio with the less, is still in its remainder greater than the remainder of the other.

The truth is, the alleged inequality is to be attributed, not to the tyranny, but to the mildness and equity of the police regulations in respect to the Sabbath, which we advocate. Were a private, inquisitorial police established, with arbitrary power to interfere with individuals in the use of all their personal resources, in that case, we might have, as the result, a seeming equality among all classes, in respect of the means and the liberty of personal accommodation. But it would be the forced equality of an arbitrary and tyrannical power. Freedom, in all its institutions and enactments,—a free government leaves men, of necessity, unequal as it finds them. The idea of natural and original equality is but a dream. Men are by nature and by Providence unequal,—unequal in their talents, unequal in their means and resources; and the police of a free administration, which touches only public acts and leaves private worth and wealth as they were, must, of course, suffer the original proportion of inequality to remain unchanged. The very equality of the law implies an inequality in its pressure. The exact proportional fairness of the restraints imposed, leads to a difference in the resources left free,—a difference corresponding to the original difference in the amount of

these resources, antecedently to the enactment of any law and the imposition of any restraints at all.

2. Now, if the State interfere to the extent to which we have seen it may legitimately interfere to promote the observance of the Sabbath, it must be not merely on civil, but on strictly religious grounds and considerations. Here I might refer to my argument regarding blasphemy, and might content myself with asking, How the Sabbath can have any existence at all, except as a religious ordinance? and how, therefore, its observance can be, to any extent, enforced on any other than religious grounds? There are some advocates, however, of Sabbath legislation, who desire to separate their own case from the general question of religious legislation, and would defend the civil law recognising the Sabbath, while yet they hold that this does not imply any interference on the part of the State, about matters properly religious. I own that I have some difficulty in comprehending and following their reasoning,—it seems to me very subtle and, I must add, somewhat evasive. If it have any meaning, it amounts to this: As there is one ordinance of weekly sacred rest, so there is another of weekly civil or secular rest; the latter of these may be enacted by the State, and may, and should, coincide with the former, which is enacted by the Church, *i. e.* by its Head. My reply is, that no such ordinance, as is here assumed, of weekly civil, or secular, apart from sacred rest, exists, or can exist. For if it do, it must be either as an ordinance of man, or as an ordinance of God. 1st, It

cannot fairly be an ordinance of man, for man has no sufficient equitable right to establish, on his own authority, such an ordinance. Men may indeed, by mutual consent, agree to observe a periodical day of rest ; but the observance of it is binding only upon those who actually consent. For it is not involved in any of the original ends or designs of the social union, such as mutual protection and defence, to which all are bound, and are justly presumed to consent, whether they do so formally or not. Men undoubtedly may rest at stated seasons if they chuse, and may reciprocally come under an obligation to do so ; but it is very difficult to establish their right to control others who do not accede to their views, and who can scarcely, in justice, be compelled against their will to make such a sacrifice of their time. Or, admitting the State's right to appoint an ordinance of *civil* rest, where is the obligation to make it coincident, in point of time, with the Divine ordinance of sacred rest ?—to fix its period of return at seven rather than at ten days ? Is the coincidence purely accidental ? Or does the State make its *secular* rest a *weekly* rest, designedly and expressly for the purpose of accommodating it to God's *weekly sacred* rest ? And is not this, so far as it goes, a distinct acknowledgment of the Divine appointment ? And if it be admitted that religion and religious considerations may suggest and prescribe the *day*, Why may they not warrant the whole ordinance ? 2d, But there is no Divine ordinance of civil apart from sacred rest. It is true, as we have seen, that in reference to the limit of the State's

interference, the ordinance of the Sabbath may be viewed in two lights. But still it is the same ordinance ; both the ends, of resting *from* secular affairs and resting *for* the worship of God, being comprehended in the one Sabbatic institution. The right of property in the seventh day is not conferred on men ; it is claimed and challenged by God ; and if the fourth commandment be recognised at all, as entitling individuals to the undisturbed possession of a weekly rest, it must be recognised as establishing the ground of their title,—as prescribing the religious character and the religious uses of their rest. *

It is admitted most fully, or rather most strongly asserted, that a weekly rest is a great civil benefit to society ; but it is a benefit which, if it act on merely civil considerations, the State can scarcely legitimately confer. It is simply in virtue of its recognition of religion, that it is enabled and warranted and authorised to confer it. The Sabbath, with all its temporal blessings, and they are many, is exclusively the gift of God to man ; and it is robbing God of his honour, to say that the State may appropriate, without acknowledgment, either the institution or its blessings ; or may act in this matter on its own authority, or in any other capacity than that of God's minister, aiding to enforce his benevolent law.

3. The advantage to the Church of the State's inter-

* See Willis and Brown on Establishments, in answer to Dr Wardlaw's reasoning on this subject, in his Treatise on the Sabbath.

ference for securing respect and reverence to the Sabbath, is great and obvious. Indeed, there can be no such thing as a general observance of the Sabbath, without some legislative enactment. The Sabbath is in this respect peculiar, distinct from other religious institutions. These may for the most part be observed by individuals, without the sanction or countenance of the State. But in the observance of the Sabbath, they need to be protected and assisted by the authority of public law. The rest of the Sabbath, being a rest from secular affairs, necessarily tends to affect the secular interests of those who keep it; and surely it is an advantage to them, to have these interests effectually secured. It is quite too much to expect that all will be *willing* to observe the Sabbath as a day of rest. But unless all observe it, few without loss can. It is difficult, it is almost impossible for any one individual to observe such a rest from his ordinary business, unless all engaged in similar business consent, or are compelled to observe it too. The impossibility in this case, it is true, is not physical but moral. It is, no doubt, literally within the power of any free man to cease from working on the Sabbath, even though all his competitors in trade continue as busy as on other days. But this implies such a risk, and such a sacrifice, as, in fact, amounts very nearly to an absolute prohibition of resting altogether. The evidence taken before the Committee of the House of Commons, on Sabbath legislation, places this point in a very strong and clear light. From that evidence, it appears that in London,

where Sunday traffic is not merely allowed, but almost required by law, individual dealers, in the several trades that are carried on, feeling the evils of the common practice, have sometimes entered into a mutual arrangement to suspend their business entirely on the Sunday. And what was the result? Other dealers, not so scrupulous, or so desirous of repose, took advantage of the open and abandoned field, pushed their trade on the Sabbath and on other days, (for it was found that the customers gave the preference during the week to the tradesmen who served them on the Sabbath,) and, in fact, in the end, the observers of the Sabbath were almost all obliged to give in. However anxious to adhere to their original agreement, however zealous in the cause and the principles they had espoused, yet they were compelled to adopt again the prevailing practice. They could not help themselves; they were losing their means of subsistence and support; they were supplanted in their trade by their more careless or more liberal rivals; and to avoid starvation for themselves and their families, they reluctantly abandoned the fruitless and ruinous experiment. Their case, as they themselves both in evidence before the Committee, and since in numerous petitions to the House, describe it, is a very urgent one, and clearly proves the necessity of legislative interference to protect the rest of the Sabbath. Mere license or permission will not here do. It is mockery to say to those inclined to observe a Sabbath, you are quite at liberty to do so. Practically they are not at liberty, unless

you hinder their competitors from working. If all could be brought to consent and combine together voluntarily, not to take advantage of one another on the Sabbath, and if all could be persuaded to stand firm in such a compact, then a legislative enactment might be dispensed with. But since such a general agreement is plainly impracticable, the sole remaining expedient is a general regulation of the legislature, protecting individuals in the observance of the Sabbatic rest, by a universal prohibition of Sabbath labour and traffic.

But admitting, it is said, that without legislative protection, the observance of the Sabbath might be attended with much risk and sacrifice, this is no loss, but rather an advantage to religion, by testing the sincerity of its professors, and so sifting and purging the Church. Well, and in the very same way, persecution is an advantage. Yet not the less on that account, the Church prays to be delivered and defended from persecution, and may equally rejoice to have her Sabbaths protected and secured. But not even to the extent alleged, is the advantage of an unprotected Sabbath fairly stated. For the Sabbath, in the scriptural view of it, is not a competent test of Christian sincerity. It is not one of the things for which man is made. These being of indispensable obligation, and paramount even to the life of man, demand, if necessary, the sacrifice of every thing. The Sabbath, on the other hand, as a positive institution, is one of the things made for man, which therefore, in urgent cases, may themselves

be sacrificed to higher and essential ends. It may demand many sacrifices : but it requires not—it warrants not the *last* sacrifice, the endurance of martyrdom, or even of extreme pain and privation, the surrender of life, or the means of employing life for the purposes for which God has given it. Consequently the Sabbath cannot reasonably or Scripturally be a fair criterion of principle, if man has in any circumstances a discretionary liberty of dispensing with its observance;—and the real result of leaving room for severe trial and persecution in regard to such an ordinance, is not a detection of the insincere, but a loss to the religious,—not that the unfaithful *may* betray themselves by neglecting a duty, but that the godly *must* suffer, by being compelled, in many instances, to forego a privilege.

On this point, an argument may be drawn from what has sometimes been urged as an objection against the obligation of the Sabbath at all in the Christian Church. Why, if it was to continue in force, why, it is asked, is there no positive and distinct enactment on the subject in the New Testament ? Why are we left to infer its continued obligation, almost incidentally, from our Lord's implied confirmation of it, when, by explaining its extent, he establishes its authority, and from Apostolical reference and example ? Now, it is to be remembered, that in the early ages of Christianity, no nation recognized the Christian faith, and no nation could be expected to protect the observance of Christian ordinances. But without such national protection, we have seen it would be difficult, nay, in many cases,

impossible for Christians to observe their Sabbath. The *servile condition* of many of the early converts, would itself be enough to prevent them. In these circumstances, was it not a wise and necessary reserve, in the early teachers of Christianity, to abstain from any very express injunction, which might have tended to clog the profession of Christianity, with a condition, in some cases impracticable? Here, therefore, some allowance was to be made, according to our Lord's maxim, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." Where there was any likelihood of the too strict enforcement of the Sabbath interfering with the essential good of men, or putting an obstacle in the way of their becoming Christians, the maxim of our Saviour's religion was decided: Perish the Sabbath,—Let the Soul of man be saved.* Still, however, these

* This is a startling dilemma. But it is good that thoughtful Christians should be startled by the possibility of its occurrence. With an unprotected Sabbath, and an irreligious community, it may, it almost certainly *must* occur. Slaves, under heathen masters, could not generally observe a Sabbath; yet they might be Christians notwithstanding. And it is not quite inconceivable, that operatives, in the employment of ungodly manufacturers, might be compelled, by the necessity of self-preservation, to relinquish the attempt to observe the Sabbath; and still might continue to be real spiritual Christians. Unable, through unrestrained competition, and the possibility of insult and injury, without certain and inevitable ruin to themselves and their families, to set apart one day in seven, they might be sincerely devoted to those ends for which the day is set apart. I suppose a very extreme case. Nothing but the

teachers did by no means abrogate the institution. They left it on its proper footing as an institution of the original religion of mankind ; and there is abundant evidence in the New Testament of the Sabbath having been punctually kept, as far as possible, by the early Christians, so much so, that even in the time of the Apostle John, the Christian Sabbath had acquired its peculiar name of the Lord's day.* Now, the point which I insist on here is, the reason, or at least one probable reason, why the early Christian teachers might feel themselves obliged to use some reserve, as to expressly and explicitly enforcing the observance of the Sabbath. The reason is, that they could nowhere calculate on any national protection and assistance in this matter, without which, they might be sensible that they could not expect, and should not, therefore, too peremptorily require, the uniform performance of a duty which, in some situations, it might be unavoidably necessary to omit. But this very reason, proving the absolute necessity of the interference of human authority to secure the liberty of obeying the Divine commandment, is an argument, and a strong argument, in favour of a legislative enactment being demanded and granted, whenever the State comes to recognise the authority of the

very last necessity could justify a Christian in dispensing with even the least of God's appointed forms. But let us open our eyes, and see to what this grievous infatuation of certain loose talkers would expose us. Let us remember that we are but flesh ; and let us rejoice that we are not too severely tried.

* Rev. i. 10. See also John xx. 19 and 26.—Acts xx. 7.
—1 Corinth. xvi. 2.

true God, and is willing to protect and support and countenance his worshippers in the observance of his ordinances. Christians everywhere, recognising the Divine authority of the Sabbath, have a right to expect, that wherever they enjoy the toleration and favour of the legislature, they shall have the rest of the Sabbath by law secured to them. And it is the corresponding duty of all States and Governments, to acknowledge in this matter the true God, and to adopt all competent measures for promoting the observance, and preventing the profanation of his Sabbath. And for the fulfilment of this duty, they are responsible both to God and to his people,—to us their Christian subjects. For as God imposes upon us an obligation to keep his Sabbath, so he confers on us, by the very fact of that obligation, a right, at the hands of men, to the undisturbed power of keeping it. As God claims the day from man, so man may claim it from his fellowmen; and it is a claim which he may urge at the bar of his country's legislature, and which that legislature is bound to admit and to regard, as it shall answer to Him by whom kings reign. This is the Church's warrant for demanding for each and all her members full and efficient protection in the peaceful observance of the Sabbath. And this is what our modern liberals call bigotry, fanaticism, an infringement on the poor man's liberty, when it is the poor man's right we mean to vindicate,—the right, the sacred, the inalienable, the Divine right of every, the poorest man in all the land,

to have the Sabbath wholly, without let or hindrance to himself, that he may give it wholly to his God.

No, it is not tyranny, it is not oppression, it is not cruelty, it is a kind and salutary and blessed arrangement, even in a worldly point of view, which gives to our over-wrought and over-burdened population, ground down to the very dust by excessive toil and trial and suffering and want, one day's repose in seven, for the refreshment of their exhausted frames, and the recollection of their distracted minds. It is not a hardship surely, this most admirable institution of Heaven, designed, as it would seem, to mitigate the original curse which condemns man to eat bread in the sweat of his brow, earning by weary labour a hard and scanty pittance. And it is just and merciful in Governments on earth to second the purpose of Heaven, and to provide an interval of rest and quiet, for that calm exercise of thought and feeling and foresight, which otherwise, in a life of incessant drudgery, were utterly and hopelessly impracticable. Yet it is simply the attempt to secure more amply and effectually to the poor the benefits of this happy institution, that some, in our day, denounce as a stretch of unequal and arbitrary and oppressive power. And they are wise statesmen too, profound and sagacious legislators;—yes, and friends of the people! pleaders for the poor! advocates of the trades!—Precious advocates! kind and warm and disinterested friends! who to gain a little paltry and pitiful fame of liberality, would make the people

loathe this rich boon, this best gift of Heaven, this refreshing manna in the desert, and rather chuse to submit themselves to the tender mercies of their worse than Egyptian taskmasters. And these are the men, these liberal philanthropists, who would grudge the toil-worn and wasted mechanic his brief and hurried respite from the hot and stifling atmosphere of the crowded factory; who would condemn the tradesman, every live long day, to his narrow stall, and chain the baker, like a galley slave, amid the noisome fumes and vapours of his reeking oven.

Alas, that any religious men should even seem to sanction a principle which may tend to deprive the people, the poor, of so inestimable an advantage as a Sabbath of rest, peacefully secured to them by the laws of God and of man. Alas, that any such should represent the State's interference for so salutary an end. And if the magistrate be allowed to interfere so far as to secure the *rest* of the Sabbath, why may he not interfere one step farther, that he may do something towards making that *rest sacred*? If he levy a general tax on the time of the community, why not on their property? Why may he not, by a liberal provision of the means of religious worship, aid yet a little more the Church in her endeavours after a universal sanctifying of the Sabbath? Does not the same regard to God which enjoins the one proceeding, authorise the other? Is the mere securing of rest a sufficient fulfilment of the Divine commandment, if nothing be

done to provide for the right employment of that rest? Is this not doing the work by halves, and leaving still a great hazard, that the interval of repose being devoted to idleness and vice, through the want of religious means, this best blessing of God may become, in too many instances, the curse of man? It is good that the people have their weekly day of rest well fenced and guarded, as a day sacred from all the world's toil and tumult. Is it not better still, that they have those weekly religious ministrations abundantly supplied, which may make the day sacred also to the pure and peaceful hopes of Heaven?

THE END.

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LECTURE VI.

ON THE ADVANTAGE WHICH THE CHURCH DERIVES
FROM HER UNION WITH THE STATE, &c.

IN considering the question regarding National Provisions for Religion, it will be the great solicitude of every man who feels a real and enlightened interest in it, to see that he do consider it in a *calm* and *conciliatory* temper, that he illustrate and defend *principles*, and avoid *personalities*, that he seek after the discovery of *truth*, and not after the triumph of a *party*, and instead of adding to the excitement, or exasperating the discontent of the popular mind, that he comport himself *meekly* towards his differing brethren. In the circumstances in which *we* are placed, owing to the keen interest that is felt in it, the controversy *is* apt to be mingled up with individual passions and prejudices and partialities. So far, therefore, as in *us* lies, we should seek to come to this question with that spirit of candour, and that singleness of purpose, which befit so serious an inquiry, to quicken

within each of us the study and the exercise of charity, and, like those who can give a reason for the faith that is in them, to be able to say to every *temperate* inquirer after truth, "We speak as to *wise* men, judge ye what we say:"—"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind,"—and "If any man be ignorant let him be ignorant."

Now, the general statement of the argument on this great question has been set forth in the printed Prospectus which is in your hands, under three heads: These relate, 1st, To the *Lawfulness*, 2d, To the *Duty*, and 3d, To the *Advantages* of an Union between the Church and State. The two first of these have been already discussed at great length, and the *last* was ably illustrated in your hearing at the former meeting, in the particular of the advantage which the Church derives from the Union with the State in regard of the decent reverence and respect which is thereby secured to her institutions.

The subject to which your attention is *this evening* to be called, relates to the advantage which the Church derives from this union, *in the extension of her means and resources, to the efficacy* which she acquires from *that* source, as an instrument for upholding the visible Church upon earth, and for disseminating its benefits equally to all those among whom it is professedly set up. We are to endeavour to shew how the Church does more fully accomplish the great object she has in view, of communicating the benefit of religious ministrations to the *wholy body* of the people, in the de-

gree, at least, which is indispensable to their spiritual interests, how she does this when, over and above being *protected* by *national power*, she is encouraged by national provision, and the maintenance of her priesthood upheld by set appropriated funds, instead of being left dependent on the particular congregations among whom its functions are exercised.

At one time, indeed, the Church was *independent* of these means and resources. These were not required for the successful promulgation of the gospel, when its preaching was enforced by *miraculous attestation*. So long as *supernatural endowments* were continued in her, and the Messengers who were sent forth, did shew the *Divine commission* which they had for the things which they uttered, by the wonders they were enabled to work,—so long as their ministry was honoured by the Deity's *immediate interposition*, they had a prosperous issue to their labours, *without* the civil respect and outward aid of national authority. But the rapid propagation which the gospel had, received an abatement the moment that miraculous agency was *withdrawn*. There was no longer that warrant for anticipating, *in measure at least*, that the *same* success would attend the preaching of the word. The work, so to speak, was then given *more entirely up* into the hands of men. The Christian mission was purposely devolved on *uninspired human ability*. It was then made *more* dependent on *that* help which royalty and revenues could give it. God withdrawing these gifts from the Church, did by *that act* not ob-

scurely intimate, that means *hitherto not used*, because *hitherto not required*, should now be had recourse to ; that the change in *this respect introduced*, behoved to be met by a corresponding change in the means that were employed ; that it was through the help of the civil power, guided, no doubt, by Him who is the great Head and Husband of the Church, that it was through *this* that *that* was to be got which was indispensable for securing His kingdom's adequate and orderly administration. On the testimony of the Ecclesiastical Historians, it would seem, that, though the *exact* time *when* miraculous agency did cease has not been ascertained, still, during the period of the second century, the spreading of the gospel was ascribed to the miraculous power which its heralds did display ; and during the whole course of it, we have unexceptionable testimony borne to the fact, that the extraordinary gifts with which the omnipotence and wisdom of the Most High had so richly endowed the rising Church, were in many places continued. Even during the century that followed, the successful promulgation of the truth was no less referred to *the healing of disease* and other *miracles*, which many Christians were still enabled to perform, so that, connecting this with the fact, that it was at the commencement of the *fourth century* that Christianity did *first* receive the countenance of civil government, it is pretty plain that no great time can have elapsed between the period when supernatural endowments did cease, and the time when the ministers of the Word did first obtain the patronage of

potentates in the work of preaching the gospel.* Nay, if we keep rigidly by history, we may assert, that the Church was in *this* respect patronised *previous* to the age of Constantine ; for in the very middle of the third century, we find it recorded of Gallienus, that when *he* came to the throne, he instantly published an edict, by which he granted to the Christians the free exercise of their religion, and commanded that all the burial-grounds belonging to their churches, and the other houses and grounds which had been confiscated under the foregoing Government, should be restored to them. “ He thus,” says Dr Neander, in his interesting History of the Christian Religion and Church during the three first centuries, “ recognised the Christian Church as a *legally existing corporate body*, for none but such a body could, according to the Roman constitution, possess a common property.”

But taking the matter as it is *generally* stated, that the Church did never receive the countenance of royal favour until the age of Constantine, the question occurs,

* We are aware that the soundness of this argument will be disputed by those who hold the opinion that the power of working miracles was confined to the apostles, and those on whom they did personally confer it, and that, of course, it disappeared with them. This is not the place for balancing the evidence on a matter which, it must be admitted, is doubtful ; we rather incline to the view stated above, but even though it were the case, that miraculous gifts were limited to the apostles, and the individuals to whom they did convey them, it is still conceivable that the influence of them might remain in the Church after those who displayed them were removed, and secure, *for some time at least*, such a measure of reverence and support for the successors of the first preachers of the Word, as to have rendered provision from other quarters unnecessary.

What was it that, in the subsequent ages, he and other potentates did do for it? It is in the face of all logic to infer, that because, in *certain* circumstances, the Church did subsist without their aid for a period of 300 years, their help in *any* circumstances could never be either agreeable to God's mind, or useful to religion. What then, in point of fact, did they do for it? Now, to answer this question, we must remember that there are two objects to be accomplished by an Ecclesiastical Establishment, the one is, to secure the administration of the ordinances of religion, the other is to be a public and standing acknowledgment of the sovereignty of Christ,—a *national* monument constantly holding forth the fact, that we are the subjects of Him whose kingdom ruleth over all. And these two objects, we maintain, *were furthered* by the countenance which, in the fourth century, kings began to give to the Church. They threw over her the mantle of their protection. They made the service of God a matter of charge and of interest with them. If they did not formally endow the Church, which some have made matter of dispute, they did at least, to *a certain extent*, the same thing, by ordering, as Gibbon tell us, “the restitution of all the civil and religious rights of which the Christians had been so unjustly deprived, and enacting that the places of worship and public lands should be restored to the Church without dispute, without delay, and without expense.” They secured a safe condition of life to those by whom Christianity was professed. In the order and stability of the true religion, by the free gifts they bestowed, and the royal

grants they set the example of dealing out, they caused the gospel to draw along with it a correspondent estimation, and secured a competent maintenance and fitting respect for those who did minister at the altar, and they left that precedent through which, because *piety*, or perhaps, *in some cases, superstition* did follow it, the treasury of Christ came to be furnished in after ages, and filled with what, whenever they are but rightly guided, must be serviceable "helps" for the upholding of religion, "Churches, and Oratories, hallowed and set apart to the honour of His name," "Lands and Livings for perpetuity conveyed to Him," "Inheritances given to remain His so long as the world shall endure," and the administration of His ordinances secured, and the expenditure of His service provided for, instead of being thrown upon that arbitrary benevolence which, with some quaintness, but with what truth I say not, the profound Barrow calls "a more plausible kind of beggary." No doubt, in the course of time, the Church did sadly degenerate. It is matter of undisputed history, and it would be quite disingenuous to disguise it, that after she had for some time enjoyed the countenance of the State, she became, indeed, more corrupt in regard both of her doctrine and her worship; and I think a candid man will not refuse to admit, that this corruption may have at least been helped, just because she lay basking "in the sunny warmth of wealth and State protection." But while a candid man will not refuse to acknowledge this, a *wise* man will be cautious ere he refer this to any *single* or *separate*

cause. There may be an *apparent* link of affinity between two events, without that link being a *real* one, and even though the connection alleged were proved, it would not be difficult to shew the existence of other causes which, if not as *speedily*, would yet *ultimately* and as *surely* have led to the same result. We have no hesitation in saying, that instead of being referred to the blandishments of royal favour, these corruptions may be explained on the principles of our common nature; as found in the Church and among any large body of men, they are nothing more than what every institution is liable to which comes under the management of human wisdom, or is subjected to the influence of human passions, and when so considered, they give no ground for the insinuation, that "Constantine marred all in the Church," or for what Dante, in his 19th canto of *Inferno*, has alleged, thus translated by our great poet:—

“ Ah Constantine ! of how much ill was cause,
Not thy conversion, but those rich domains
That the first wealthy Pope received of thee.”

But we would put the question, Did the corruption of the Church *commence* in the reign of Constantine? The opponents of Establishments have many of them taken up the idea, that during the first century, when the Church was uncared for by any of the civil powers of the world, she was every thing which a Christian man could desire her to be, that her apostolic virtue departed from her the moment she laid hold on their

carnal supportment, and a distinguished writer on the subject, in a sermon which he published on Civil Establishments of Christianity, has gravely told us, that, “during *that* period, when left to its own native energies and self-recommending excellence, to the zeal of those devoted friends who loved not their lives to the death, and to the accompanying agency of the Divine Spirit, the conquests of the truth was wide and wonderful. In this its early history, therefore,” he says, “we have surely a fair specimen of what it might have *continued* to do, had it been allowed thus to go forward on its own resources.”

Now, we say, that it is in the face of all history to make such an averment. We say, that every man who will just read the accounts which have been given us of the three first centuries, will see, that even in *the age of miracles*, and under the uncommon outpouring of the Spirit of God, that even under the scourge of persecution, while the sword of death was suspended every moment over their head, and at least two centuries before the working of an Establishment could even be *imagined* to have effect, that even *then*, many heresies did prevail, many immoralities were winked at, many practices allowed inconsistent with the good order of Christ’s Church, many corruptions chargeable both upon pastor and people. We refer you in proof of this, to any one of the Ecclesiastical writers of that period, and have at present only time to make one or two quotations illustrative of the fact. The Apostles themselves, in their Epistles, have shewn what corrup-

tions of doctrine and practice prevailed in the very *first* centuries ; and on a case referred to by St. Paul, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, the late John Newton, speaking of the instances of disorder alluded to by that Apostle, says, “ I apprehend that these cannot be paralleled by the most irregular proceedings in our time, among any people that hold the principles which I am at present engaged to vindicate.” * St. Cyprian was elevated to the See of Carthage about the year 248. For upwards of 30 years before this, except during the reign of Maximin, there had been no general persecution of the Christians, and the Church had enjoyed an almost uninterrupted tranquillity. The melancholy effects of this state of security, were exhibited in a very prevalent degeneracy from that spirituality of mind and purity of manners by which, in preceding periods, the followers of Jesus had been distinguished ; and this Bishop, in his Treatise on the case of the lapsed in which he ascribes the calamities which soon after befel the Church to the corruption of manners among the Christians, thus sets forth the condition of the Church in Africa. “All,” he says, “were set

* See this quoted by the Rev. Mr Gibson of Glasgow, in the Historical Essay which he published on the Principle of Voluntary Churches being the real origin of Romish and Priestly Domination, and I quote it here, among other purposes, for the opportunity which it gives me of recommending this Essay, which, though the work of a man enamoured of his argument, is yet one of the best and most useful contributions which the present controversy has called forth.

upon an immeasurable increase of gain, and *forgetting* how the *first converts* to our holy religion had behaved under the personal direction and care of our Lord's Apostles, or how all ought in after times to carry themselves, their *love of money* was their darling passion, and the *master-spring of all their actions*. The religion of the clergy slackened and decayed, the faith of priests and deacons grew languid and inactive, *works of charity* were discontinued, and an universal licence and corruption prevailed everywhere, and had tainted all ranks and orders of men amongst us. Not only rash oaths, but even *perjuries* were rife and common, a haughty contempt of Ecclesiastical rulers had generally prevailed, mutual contentions and revilings had spread their poison *far and near*, divers bishops, who should have taught others better, both by their example and persuasion, neglecting their high trust and their commission from above, entered upon the management of secular affairs, and leaving their chair and their charge with it, strolled about from place to place in different provinces upon mercantile business, and in quest of an ignominious gain. And thus," adds St. Cyprian, "*the poor of the Church were miserably neglected*, whilst the bishops, who should have taken care of them, were intent upon nothing but their own private profit, which they were forward to advance at *any rate*, and by *any means*, even the foulest." Let me mention too, what Eusebius states regarding Novatian, a Presbyter of the Church of Rome, who managed to become a Bishop. "This brave Doctor,"

says the Ecclesiastical Historian, “ who pretended himself to be a maintainer of the Church Discipline, when he endeavoured by force to acquire to himself, and surreptitiously to steal, the Bishopric which was not assigned to him by God, chose for his confederates, two men who despaired of salvation, that he might send them into some little corner, and the most despicable part of Italy, and there delude three bishops, who were simple and unlearned men, by a certain fraudulent interprise, affirming and protesting, that with all possible speed they must post to Rome, that the disagreement which had been there, might, by their mediation, together with the other Bishops, be composed. When they arrived, being, as we said before, persons inexperienced in the plots and subtlety of these wicked men, having been shut up close by some persons like himself, who were assigned for that purpose, at ten of the clock, he compelled them, being drunk and dozed over with much wine, to give him the Bishopric, by an imaginary and ineffectual imposition of hands, and he laid claim to that, by craft and subtlety, which did in no wise belong to him.”* And these were all Voluntary Bishops, all Bishops that were never corrupted by the pay and privilege of an Establishment.

The celebrated Origen, cotemporary with Cyprian, gives an equally lamentable account of the Alexandrian Church. In one of his Homilies he thus ex-

* Eusebius, lib. vi. chap. 43.

presses himself:—"Several come to Church only on solemn festivals, and then, not so much for *instruction* as for *diversion*; some go out again as soon as they have heard the Lecture, without conferring with, or asking the pastor, any questions; others stay not till the Lecture is ended, and others hear not so much as a single word, but entertain *themselves in a corner of the Church*." Now, these things prevailed in the Church in those very centuries which our respected opponents have told us in *print*, constitute the *golden* period of her history. These practices prevailed in her at a time, when, to use their own language, "the zeal of individuals and Churches was lively, and active, and efficacious, when Christians felt that all depended upon it, when each Church was a Missionary Society." Such representations may suit the popular fancy, but they are altogether at variance with the facts of history. Our assertion, and our proof from history is, that the Church became corrupt *long before* she was established; that the *Apostles* have told us she became corrupt, in some measure, even in their age; that she became corrupt, notoriously corrupt, in the second and third centuries; that her corruptions multiplied when she *ceased* to be persecuted, and when none were allowed to suffer for their profession of the Gospel, and that all these corruptions are to be referred, not to the circumstance of her being *with or without* an endowment, but to the degeneracy of men themselves. The argument deduced from this fact by our opponents,

proves a great *deal too much* to be a good one, for if, regarding the way in which the Church should be carried on, we are to draw any inference from the history of her corruption, the one that can most legitimately be drawn is, that she should ever be kept in a state of *persecution*, seeing that she was perhaps always the purest, when exposed to endure all the hardness of an afflicted condition. The truth is, being a body *collective*, because it contains a multitude which no man can number, and a body *mystical*, because the mystery of their conjunction of whom it is made up is not perceptible to sense, we are not to expect, however different may be the degrees of it, that the Church is *ever* to be *free* from corruption. Considered merely as a *visible* Church, her members are in that *net* in which there are fishes good and bad,—they make a part of that *lump*, in regard of which, whether *leavened or unleavened*, it is God only who knows ; and notwithstanding of all the efforts that may be made, and all the prayers that may be put up, the tares and wheat *will* continue to be mingled together, nor are they to be separated “until the harvest,” that harvest which is “the end of the world.”

But, to put the matter in a yet stronger light, we will just admit, for the sake of argument, all that our opponents wish, and after making the large concession, that the corruptions which crept into the Church *are* to be ascribed to the circumstance of the Church having been established, we say, that in the mind of a *reflecting* man, this would be no argument for disre-

garding what is *in itself a good thing*, and what only requires to get a discreet usage in order to its producing the very *best* results. Be it so as John Milton says, that the Establishment of the Church made her "rich, and lofty, and lawless," still we cannot sanction the principle, that the abuse of any thing is any sound argument against its excellence and its truth. The Church, as protected by the State, is fitted to accomplish what she *never could* accomplish, if all her support was left to individual free-will. And wicked men *may* take such advantage of this protection, as to make use of it as an instrument for their own criminal designs. But to such treatment *every* blessing is exposed. And if this really form a *good* ground of objection, why should it not be *consistently followed out, and urged against every privilege which we have?* We do not discard the philosopher because his power is sometimes employed to mislead mankind; nor accuse the Creator of encouraging *Idolatry*, by the lamps which He has placed in the firmament, because men have given to these the homage of their adoration, nor despise the efforts of those who are zealous in a *good* thing, because, in the exercise of a zeal that is *not* accompanied with knowledge, they injure the very cause which they profess themselves willing to advocate. No; in all these cases we carefully distinguish between that which is good in itself, and the abuse which is made of it in the hands of indiscreet men, and in this case, we should be equally

careful to separate the argument and the evidence which we have in favour of the Establishment of religion, and the conduct of those who, instead of using it as they ought, prostitute the ends of it, and turn it to subserve purposes with which it has no necessary connection, and which it most assuredly was never meant to promote. It is not enough to tell us, that a religion cannot be pure because it is the religion of the State,—to make the Establishment principle responsible for its corruptions, unless we can, at the same time, show, not only that it would have remained in purity *without* the State, but that it was the introduction of this principle that rendered its administration no longer undeflowered and unblemished. Our Lord himself certainly acted on this idea, when, notwithstanding of the corrupt governing by which the Established religion of Judaism was in His day distinguished, He yet, instead of withdrawing from it himself, or advising others to withdraw from it, spoke of it in these terms of reverence and respect:—"The Scribe and Pharisee sit in Moses' seat, all therefore, whatever they observe, that observe and do."

The corruption which, it is alleged, was introduced by Constantine, and deepened its roots, extended its branches, and brought forth the bitterest and most destructive fruits during many subsequent centuries, received a check at the period of the Reformation, when, rousing from the slumber of the middle ages, the Church shook off those shackles which priestcraft

had long put upon her. A new adjustment was made of the property and privileges connected with her. The corrupt form which Christianity had assumed was thrown off by the State. Ignorance, instead of being any longer worshipped as the Mother of Devotion, was brought into disrepute. A new appropriation was made of the endowments belonging to the priesthood, some of them certainly applied, in the lawlessness of despotic power, to ends inconsistent with the objects for which they were originally intended, and the rest made available for the purpose of training up a well-educated population. In this country, though no doubt later than the Reformation, along with that provision for his Zion, which the Lord hath abundantly blessed, came the endowment of our *National Schools*, so that, in virtue of the Establishment we enjoy, we have not only an appointed priesthood in every parish, but we have also a parochial school, where all may have an opportunity of sending their children, and the very poorest, if need be, have them gratuitously educated. One cannot speak in too glowing terms of the proud peculiarity which this land enjoys through the medium of those moral nurseries which are part and parcel of our Establishment. Owing to these it is that assembled Senates make choice of *this* country, as their best example, when they settle the question of the advantages of knowledge,—owing to these that eloquence delights to expatiate upon it, as the land of educated men.

This, then, is what the people derive from the connection which the Church has with the State. Wherever the Establishment is adequately and efficiently kept up, wherever it is preserved in healthful constitution in regard both of its extensiveness and its working, the great object is secured of moral religious instruction being diffused throughout all the masses of the people. Now, we suggest the inquiry upon which this whole controversy turns, when we ask, independent of the provision for this end furnished by the State, could the requisite provision be furnished if left to the free-will offering of the people? Our opponents say 'that it *could*.' We dispute and deny the statement. They contend, that if the Church had not co-annexed to it the pay and privilege of the Government, that if religion were left to itself without the prop and buttresses of natural provision, that then, by the agency of Voluntary Churches, the administration of religious ordinances would be abundantly secured to all, so that even as society should encrease its numbers, and enlarge its boundaries, and spread over a wider territory, the means of religious instruction would keep pace with the enlargement in other respects, there would be both a demand for the services of Christian ministers equal to the spiritual wants of the community, and, in the good principle of the people, a fund adequate to maintain them. Now, we say that this is a very bold opinion; with every disposition to give it the most dispassionate attention, we see no ground whatever on

which to rest such an anticipation, and without questioning either the candour or the sincerity of those who maintain it, we hold that the position is what painters would call a mere fancy-piece, that it is, in the face of every thing that we observe, contradicted by all experience, and contrary to the known principles of fallen man.

At the expense of all chaste diction, some very *familiar* illustrations have been given of the sentiment to which I have just referred; but without alluding to these, we may remark, that the idea itself is made sufficiently intelligible, when they tell us that the profession of an ecclesiastic should be put on the same footing with the *medical*, and that as there are no appropriated funds for the support of the latter, but every man is left to call it in according as he finds that he doth need it, and the system works well enough, so should every one be left to find out the pastor whom he may require, and apply to him for spiritual advice or consolation, according as his circumstances may urge. But, in the illustration which they thus give, who is there that *reflects*, who will be long of discovering the utter fallacy which there is in it. In the case of *bodily* ailments, we have a sufficient guarantee, in the *effects which they produce*, that the help which is needed *will* be called in. When a man lies stretched upon a bed of torture, or is suffering under the languor of disease, and unable to follow the occupations of busy life, his own feelings are sufficient

to stir him up to send for him whose professional skill may arrest the progress, and countervail the effects of his trouble. And were it in the *spiritual* world, as it is in the *natural*, the illustration which our opponents give us might be a *good* one. If men were as alive to the wants of their *moral*, as they are with regard to the necessities of their *animal* nature, some dependence might be put upon the supposition, that the ultraneous demand for the ministrations of religion would prove adequate to the wants of the community, and that, irrespective of State Provision, Christian teachers would be sufficiently called for and multiplied throughout the land. But how stands the fact? Is there an individual in this assembly who will dispute that there is originally in the hearts of all men the deepest slumber of spiritual insensibility, that in their natural state they care not for the things of their peace, that they desire not that meat which the world "knoweth not of?" Can it be disputed, that so grovelling are the propensities with which they are born, that they regard not the provisions that may be placed within their reach for the attainment of the bread of life, that the reversionary prospects, toward which a *sense of futurity* would direct their contemplations, are swallowed up, in the *lively excitement*, the *heart-felt glow*, which a mere *present interest* succeeds in creating? Does it admit of debate, that so long as health is continued to them, and their corn and their wine abound, and the world goes well with them, and they go well

with the world, they wish to be left undisturbed by the appliances of religion, that not, until *disease* lay hold upon them, and death perhaps look in as if he *were* approaching, in the proportion of cases will they seek after the admonitions of pastoral affection? Is it not a matter of fact, that in the lanes of our crowded cities, there are multitudes whom no minister of *any* kind ever visits, and who do never think of calling for *his* help, even amid the agonies of a dying bed? And from this total inappetency of men for religion, is it not made but *too* evident that this is an article of which they naturally feel not the want, and which they will never make *spontaneous* efforts to obtain? Why, if you could impregnate the minds of the population with the principles of divine truth, if you could plant *there* a devout and feeling sense of religion, if pure and influential Christianity became widely and permanently dominant; then, provided they always had the means, there *would be* a security for the demand for spiritual ministrations proving adequate to the spiritual wants of the community, and a right proportion of Christian Teachers being *always* supplied. But, in the whole controversy that is now carrying on, nothing has been so *easily* shewn, because there is nothing that lies more palpable to observation, than that if this matter were trusted to every man's individual seeking, the instruction that would be applied for and sought after, would be far short of the instruction that would be required. It is not in *this* case, as it is with regard to the articles that minister to the wants of our

physical nature. In that case, it *is* true, that when we are destitute of such a thing, we earnestly seek after it ; our appetite for it knoweth no bounds, we put forth the most vigorous activity in order to attain it, and the getting of all such things may be safely entrusted to the loud cry that will be made for them. Thus it *is* with the meat that perisheth. Thus it is *not* in regard of the food of life, and immortality. It is due to the depravity of our nature, that we go not in quest of it with any measure of desire that is at all in proportion to the interest which we have in it. Not indeed until the Spirit of God take effect on the human heart, do men in any circumstances feel their need of it, in the *degree* at least in which it ought to be felt ; and were there no provision furnished by the State for sending forth an order of men who might bring it within their notice and their reach, there are thousands and tens of thousands in *every* land who would never get it, who, if left to themselves, would seek it not, and therefore never could find it, who, having no sense of its value, would contribute nothing either to procure or to preserve it, and the native preference of whose mind is, that they should be suffered to pass through life undisturbed by the terrors of a judgment to come.

Now, in so far as the question is argued upon principles of *expediency*, this has always appeared the strongest ground upon which Church Establishments do rest. The appetites of men are, in general, sufficiently vigorous to urge them to seek, without *any external excitement*, what the wants of their animal

nature do demand. The importunities of hunger and thirst, are sufficient to stimulate and to stir them up to get that by which these importunities may be allayed. But because circumstances are different with their moral, and intellectual, and spiritual nature, because the human being deeply buried in ignorance and sin, has no painful consciousness of his condition, because however the case may be with respect to what pertains to life, yet, unless roused up by some influences from without, in the ordinary providence of God he will remain the subject and the slave of his animal feelings, poor, and blind, and naked, and in want of every thing, with respect to that which pertains to godliness, therefore is it that Established Churches became necessary to teach religion, and Endowed Schools and Universities to impart the blessings of common or scientific education, that Clergy and Professors, paid by the State, have been compared "to staff officers and an army aggression, appointed, as it were, to wage war on public apathy and indifference, the former going, as it were, from house to house, and invading the dormant inmates, rousing them with the din of knowledge, and urging them to the conquest of religion."* They bring to the people's doors, that spiritual food for which, indeed, they have no *natural* appetite, but through which alone they can be nourished up to life everlasting. One of the great objects of the Establishment that sends them forth, is to see that the

* See Combe's Lectures on Education.

Gospel be preached *to the poor*,—that its ministrations be given to even the *meanest* man in the land, without money and without price. It seeks that the pastor should walk forth among them as a Scribe, “well instructed in the kingdom of heaven,” as a faithful steward of the mysteries of God, feeding each of his parochial flock with the meat which they respectively require, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom to *all*, without being burdensome to *any*. This is the real doctrine of a Church Establishment, and the great footing on which, *when defended on principles of expediency*, it ever ought to be put. It is of its very essence, and that *without* which it would be scarcely worth maintaining, that, as the heralds of that gospel in whose service it is set up, it should send forth its servants to the highways and hedges, and compel men to come in, that they should teach and preach Jesus Christ to the *chief of sinners*, to the last and lowest, the most degraded outcasts of society.

But the question is immediately asked us, Does the Establishment *in reality* do this? Is it consistent with the facts in its history, that its ministers *have* brought the lessons of religion to the very poorest in the land? Do we find, in their several parishes, all the people leavened with the doctrines of divine truth, and that there is not an individual family among them, who have not these regularly brought to their door? Is this a picture of the Establishment as we actually find it? Now, we own that it is *not*, that the representation now given is a representation which is not *uni-*

versally true, but we say that it belongs to the *Establishment, as such*, that it *should* be true, and that it *was* true, *until the population got beyond the provision*, and the State left that to the *operation of the Voluntary principle*, which can never be done at all, unless done by the State itself. The *chief*, if not the *sole* cause, why such a thing can be alleged against the Church, is because she has been crippled in her means, and no just proportion maintained between them and an encreasing population; and had she just obtained that which is now sought for her, an extension of her resources, an abundant benediction would have been *continued* to be poured out upon her stores, and the poor been always supplied and satisfied with her bread. When, *under the influence of the Voluntary principle*, would this country have been delivered from the darkness of Popery? for it is admitted, even by the most zealous of those who are so clamorous in calling for her separation from the State, that the Established Church of this country, in the hand of Him who is the Head of the Church, was that which did leaven the whole land,—the whole Lowlands at least,—with the principles of the Reformation,—brought within the reach of the poorest man, the blessings of education for his family, and diffused throughout the mass of society, those views in regard both of morals and Christianity, to which is to be referred, not only the *religious* but even the *civil* liberty we now enjoy. Such a fact is matter of undisputed history, and it is a fact, that the Church did so just because she was

Established. At her first erection, she had to encounter the monster of Popery; and in so short a period as 20 years after the Reformation, it is recorded in the Dedication of the Scottish Bible to James VI. in 1579, "that so great had been the progress of religious instruction in a country where, a few years before, the Bible was not suffered to be read, almost every house possessed a copy; and a few years later, scarcely a man, woman, or child was found unable to read it." Had the original platform of the Scottish Kirk been preserved and acted upon, in what a different state would this country have been now. According to the opinion of her founders, a thousand souls, when concentrated, were considered as sufficient for the labours of one pastor, of one catechist, and of one schoolmaster. "Into every house in his locality the pastor was to enter *frequently*, and not seldomer than once a year; he was to take account of the family, to inquire after the absent, to take down in his roll-book the name of the stranger who had newly arrived, to observe who could not read, and adopt measures for getting them made acquainted with the schoolmaster; to inquire the wants of Bibles and Catechisms and Confessions of Faith; to make the wants of the poor known to the rich, that the abundance of the one might be brought to relieve the poverty of the other;" and just suppose that the resources furnished by the State for the Church had been multiplied as they were *required*, that instead of the painful sight which we *now* behold, of parishes containing from

three to ten, twenty, thirty, nay to the enormous reckoning of upwards of seventy thousand, the provision had been so kept up, as that they should never have exceeded their original prescribed amount, that Scotland had been *now* what she was a century ago,—had had a pastor and a church to every thousand souls,—who does not see what an agent of usefulness she would have continued to be for every class of the people, and that the great reason why her usefulness has been abridged, and she has not done that for the *multitudinous masses among the lower orders* which she otherwise would have done, is to be traced just to the want of those appropriated means, without which, we maintain, all history and experience and observation, as well as the very nature of the thing, concur to prove, there never can be got an adequate maintenance of an adequate ministry, and that, of course, myriads of souls in the abodes of *poverty* will be left uncared for. It may be that in some places the Ecclesiastical Establishment has been carried on by men who had no heart-love for the cause of which they professed to be the abettors. It may be that there are *those still* within her who are unfaithful to the trust committed to them, and cause the people to err from the path of knowledge, and I think that every one of us whom God has called to minister at his altars, instead of claiming for her a measure of perfection which pertains to *no* human institution, would do well to confess our short-comings, and to mourn over them with contrite and unsuborned tears. But still we hold, in despite

of all the blots and blemishes that may be pointed out as attached to her, and in despite of the *little* that, in her present *crippled* state, she does for the multitude of heathens that may be found within her pale, still we hold that it enters into her very element as an Established Church, and that which she *would* do if she received what, *as such*, she is *entitled* to receive, that she bring the lessons of Christian instruction within the reach of *every* individual in *every* class of the land. Again, therefore, we repeat, that *on the strength of her State* provision, the Church in *this land* once did this, and that she would have continued to do so, had it not been for that spirit of niggardly economy which has been exercised towards her, and because of which, this country, though it has been rising in wealth, has yet been going back in morals,—immense masses of the people being left to exist, unleavened by the purifying influence of Christian ministrations.

What a Church can do, without the resources I have referred to, is not now a question of very difficult solution, for the thing itself has been tried, and tried too under a variety of circumstances, so that we do pretty well know, by this time, the extent of its efficacy. The Churches formed, and kept up by our brethren in this and other countries, who recognize *not* the principle of an Establishment, we have no disposition to deny that they are *Churches of Christ*. We know them to have been graced by men who stood prominent among the most able and the most amiable of the age they enlightened and adorned, and who, having

finished the work of a laborious and a watchful ministry, are now reaping the reward of their free and faithful service, and that they still number among them, gifted champions of the truth, who, convicting and confuting the gainsayer, are bearing *that* part in the Christian warfare to which *moderate* talent is inadequate. But, notwithstanding of this admission, which we do most sincerely make, we still say that, just for the *want* of those very means which some of them in those days think the Church would be better without, the whole system of Dissent has been utterly insufficient for bringing to the great mass of the population, the lessons of divine truth. It does very well for those who make up their congregations, but it aims not *beyond* them. It is for the edification of those that are *within*. It professes not to be a missionary enterprise for the conversion of those that are without. It answers in those places where an evangelical ministry in the Establishment has created a taste for the ministrations of religion,—for those who have there a real appetite for the ordinances of the gospel, and who are in circumstances to pay for it. It does little, so long as *it takes not the endowment of the State*, it *never can do much*, for the multitudes in the land, the people of the highway and the hedge, the lanes and the environs of our cities, who exhibit the affecting compound of poverty and vice, and who, so long as left to themselves, will *never* seek after instruction in that godliness which has the promise, not only of this life, but also of that which is to come. God forbid that we

should speak lightly of the labours of those brethren in the ministry, who, according to the means that are given to them, do what they can in the service and for the sake of Christ; but if, on the idea that the Church, for the first centuries did prosper, without *the aid of the Civil power*, Establishments are to be done away with, and the preachers of the Word to be called upon to subsist like the Apostles before them, "to provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in their purses," then, I say, restore to them the endowments with which these men were invested, give back the gifts of the *Apostolic* age, let *them* get the miraculous powers, and special outpourings of the Spirit, and their doings be a second time sustained by the visible action of the Deity.

In the printed Syllabus of these Lectures, our attention is directed to illustrations taken both from *abroad and at home*, and we are called to consider how the Voluntary principle has worked in America, and how it has worked in our own land. With regard to the *former* of these, it is sufficient of itself to furnish matter for a single separate Lecture, and it is perhaps to be regretted that it was not made so in the plan. The subject has received that full investigation which its extreme importance demands, and we *feel* that we cannot do it the justice which it deserves, without entering into minute details, balancing conflicting statements, and furnishing you with minutiae of American society for which we have at present no time. But still, though circumstanced at this late hour, as to be

prevented from saying *much* on the subject, and though on a matter that has been so generally canvassed, the little that we may say can scarcely be expected to come recommended by its *novelty*,* we would yet turn your attention for a few moments to it, and shew you the grounds which we have for affirming, that when our opponents seek to palm upon us the belief, that the Voluntary principle hath succeeded in America, we are only amazed at the boldness of such an attempt in the face of all evidence and notoriety. Voluntary Churches, no doubt, never had a better opportunity than there, of manifesting those powers which their advocates claim for them, and of shewing, in the face of the world, that Establishments, instead of *promoting*, did but *disservice* to the cause of religion. The Voluntary system in that country was carried into effect by the most vigorous and virtuous men,—men who fled from intolerance at home, and sought, in despite of perils and privations, to enjoy liberty of con-

* Most of the quotations that follow regarding the state of religion in America, have been made by almost every writer on the subject. The author, however, considered them as apposite as any which he had leisure to select; and they, perhaps, were new to many to whom the Lecture was addressed. He would recommend to those who wish to make a thorough examination of this matter, the masterly and unanswerable Pamphlet by the Reverend Mr Lorimer of Glasgow, entitled, "The Past and Present Condition of Religion and Morality in the United States of America, an argument not for Voluntary, but for Established Churches."

science amid the wilds of the western world. Instead of being exposed to what have been called, "the exactions of a rapacious priesthood, and the vexatious annoyance of a tyrannical government," they were left free and unimpeded to give full effect to the system of which some of them were enamoured; and if ever there was a country upon earth where the system could be tried under favourable auspices, it was without controversy there. And what has been the success attendant on it? Does America hold forth the aspect, not of an intelligent, for we do not dispute that, but of a *religious intelligent* people? Does it appear that the blessings of religious instruction are there so universally diffused, and its influence so deeply felt, that Divine ordinances are so highly appreciated and so carefully provided for, as to expose the virtue of that system which has been so long pursued in this one? Has the gospel there had such a *progressive* course, and told with such efficacy upon the people, as to shew that nothing is a more real barrier to its making way in the land, than just the Establishment principle for which we contend? Why, we have no hesitation in affirming, that the very *reverse* is the case. Instead, however, of asking you to take our opinion, we would beseech you to read for yourselves,—to read with temper and attention on *both* sides of the question,—to look at the argument and evidence set forth *both by friends and foes*, and we have little hesitation in saying, that, after making all allowances, if facts are duly considered, and evidence dispassionately weighed,

and the consequences fairly deduced which it will be found to authorise, that you will see that the Voluntary system there operating without impediment, has left *vast tracts*, by far *the greater part* of the American population, altogether *without* the administration of Christian ordinances, or the teaching of a settled ministry. Is it not true, that in the *Northern* States, where there was something analogous to our Establishment adopted, that there the means of religious instruction have kept some pace with the wants of an encreasing population; that in the *Southern* States, where the Voluntary system exists in all its purity, the great majority of the people, though many of them thriving in their worldly vocation, are yet living without God and without hope, ignorant of the very first elements of Christianity, and that those who ought to know, and whose integrity is unimpeachable, have solemnly averred, that, while in the former States, there will be found one minister to twelve hundred inhabitants, that in the latter, there will be found only one minister to nine thousand?

Many whom I now address, I have no doubt, are well acquainted with the testimony of Dr Dwight. No man had better opportunities of forming a correct opinion on this subject, few had more capacity or candour in judging of it; yet, he gave it as his belief, that the state of the American Churches was one of the strongest arguments in favour of the Divine approbation of Establishments. He tells us, in the fourth volume of his Travels, “ that in Connecticut, where

the State *does* interest itself in favour of the Church, any inhabitant, who is not precluded by disease or inclination, may hear the gospel every Sabbath ; while in the Southern States, where the Voluntary system is allowed undisturbed to display all its native energies, it is not improbable that many of the people had never heard a sermon or a prayer in their lives." So testified Dr Dwight more than 30 years ago ; and should it be said, or supposed, that these facts describe a state of things which existed long ago, but that a new order has begun, we would ask, where were the benefits of the Voluntary system in America down to 1800 ? Did that system work as beneficially as its present advocates imagine or anticipate ? Was religion at that period more prosperous in America than in Scotland ? But it is but fair that we come later down in the religious history of this country. We would come down to 1815, and we would ask, Was religion in a more flourishing condition then than it was 15 years before ? Let the following statement, which has been quoted by almost every writer on the subject, given by Messrs Mills and Smith in their Report of a Missionary tour throughout that part of the United States which lies west of the Allegany Mountains, bear witness. They speak of some American families, who never saw a Bible, nor heard of Jesus Christ ; and after a detail of many similar circumstances, they sum up what they had seen and felt in the following terms :—" Never will the impression be erased from our hearts that has been made by beholding those scenes of wide-spreading

desolation. The whole country, from Lake Erie to the Gulf of Mexico, is as the 'valley of the Shadow of Death.' Darkness rests upon it. Only here and there a few rays of gospel light pierce through the awful gloom. This vast country contains more than a million of inhabitants. Their number is every year encreased by a mighty flood of emigration. Soon will they be as the sand by the sea-shore for multitude. Yet there are at present only a little more than one hundred Presbyterian, or Congregational Ministers, in it. Were these ministers equally distributed throughout the country, there would be only one to every ten thousand people. But now there are districts of country, containing from twenty to fifty thousand inhabitants, *entirely destitute*. And how shall they hear without a preacher."

In the account of the Massachusetts's Society for promoting Christian knowledge, published at Andover about the same period, we read thus:—"It is to be regretted," speaking of Rhode Island, "that but few of the instructors are duly qualified for their employment; that in most of the schools, no religious nor moral instruction is given; that the voice of prayer is never heard, nor the Bible read in them. So great, indeed, is the fear of the Catechism in most towns, that in many schools, even the commandments are not permitted to be taught." Again we read:—"It may be stated generally, that in the counties of Rockingham and Strafford, containing, exclusively of Portsmouth and Exeter, seventy-six towns, and, according

to the census in 1810, eighty-three thousand and forty-seven inhabitants, there are forty-five towns, which, with their inhabitants, *forty thousand two hundred and eighty-six souls, are destitute of the* stated means of grace. Of these forty-five towns, some have been destitute ten, some twenty, some thirty, some forty years, and in some, the gospel ministry has never been statedly enjoyed. One lamentable consequence is, that in some towns, a Christian Church has not yet been formed, and in some where Churches exist, the Lord's Supper has not, for ten, twenty, or thirty years, been once administered. Most of these Churches are also much reduced in numbers ; one from sixty-two members to two females ; several to but one male member, and in one town, containing one thousand and sixty-three souls, the Visible Church of Christ, after a stated ministry of 28 years, has been many years totally extinct."

In a Report published in the year 1818, by the Directors of the American Society for educating poor youths for the gospel ministry, a correspondent of the Directors says, in one of his communications :—" I have too often seen in other parts of the country, professed preachers of the gospel, who could not teach, and would not learn. Judge, then, how I must have felt in this region, where I have seen more than one preacher who was ready to avow that he could not read the Bible."

I must not, however, allow myself to trespass any longer upon your time in making extracts in relation

to a subject which I feel cannot be done justice to when thus referred to incidentally in the way of illustration, but I cannot omit giving you one or two extracts in addition, regarding the *provision which in that country is made* for the priesthood. The Rev. Timothy Flint, a Presbyterian Clergyman, a native of New England, who left that part of the United States in the year 1815, with his wife and children, in the hope of establishing himself in his professional capacity amid the incipient cultivation of the great western wilderness, this poor man, who, so far from giving any misanthropic narrative of his journeyings in the valley of the Mississippi, makes rather liberal allowance for the untoward circumstances against which he had so long striven in vain, who dwells with delight and gratitude on the individual kindnesses which he occasionally experienced, and expatiates with patriotic enthusiasm on the civilization and refinement which, he doubts not, will in due time overspread the scene of his personal sufferings and privations, he, on that point, thus expresses himself:—"The Atlantic country has heard much, and too much, about their willingness to support preachers in these regions. There may be a few exceptions that have not come to my knowledge, widely as I have travelled, but I feel too well assured, all other representations to the contrary notwithstanding, that the people think in general, that *attendance upon preaching sufficiently compensates the minister*. No minister of any Protestant denomi-

nation, to my knowledge, has ever received a sufficient living *two years in succession*. Take these circumstances together, and you will then have some idea of a minister's prospect of worldly success and comfort." —“ Many faithful men, who have been associated with me in these labours, have fallen in these wildernesses, after having encountered all these difficulties. What is worse, they have fallen almost unnoticed, and their sufferings unrecorded. For they toiled and died, though it may be 800 leagues away, in an American desert; and with such a decease, there are connected no feelings of romance, while the Missionary who falls in a foreign land, is lamented as an hero and a martyr, provision is made for his family, and the enthusiasm and regret of romantic sensibility attach to his memory.” On another occasion he says, “ for two years, though I laboured in season and out of season, I derived not support enough from the people, *to defray the expenses of my ferriage over the rivers*.” In the Memoirs of Dr Dwight, it is stated, that so inadequate was *his* provision, “ that he laboured through the week upon a *farm*, and preached on the Sabbath to different vacant congregations in the neighbouring towns;” and the Biographer of Dr Payson tells us, “ that his father, *like most ministers of country parishes*, derived the means of supporting his family from a farm which his sons assisted in cultivating.”

Now, facts like these, which we might multiply to an almost indefinite extent, require no comment. If

our opponents can disprove them, then, of course, the reasoning built upon them will fall, and this is what ought, certainly, to be done, ere America be so triumphantly appealed to. It will not do to reply that according to our own admission, while there may be, as we have shewn, a great defect of the means of religious instruction in America, there is also a great defect of it in our own country, and that in many of our large towns, the people are equally bad in respect of ignorance, and profligacy, and irreligion, for, while the fact is undeniable, it is to be accounted for by the very *want* of those resources, against which our opponents contend,—it is because the provision furnished by the State for religious instruction, has kept no pace with the encrease of the population,—because, in short, there has been something left to the operation of the Voluntary principle, that principle, which, were it the *correct* one, would have made these very towns, instead of being so far behind with regard to the lower classes in religion and morality, in this respect the brightest and most refreshing on which the Christian eye could look.

But then, it is said, that there have been, within these few years, extraordinary *revivals of religion* in the United States, and these are referred to as impugning the accuracy of the representations which have now been given. In the little, however, which we have to offer regarding them, we would say, 1st, That there are strong grounds for discrediting the accounts which have been given of many of them, and that, when we consider the quarter from which they have proceeded,

the individuals to whom they have been sent, the letters and inquiries, to which many of the accounts are replies, we shall at least have some reason for suspecting, in some cases, these accounts to have been *colour-ed* by those who had previously a congeniality of mind with what is represented to have taken place, and who exhibit rather what they wish to have been true, than what, on strict and severe scrutiny, can be demonstrated to be true. I am well aware that these revivals have been made the subject of ridicule and reprehension by scoffing and sceptical writers, and, without meaning to apply such epithets to the authoress of the talented and very lively work, entitled "The Domestic Manners of the Americans," we would say that her authority on this point, is at least questionable, from the style of satirical smartness in which she more than once indulges against evangelical religion. Yet the Rev. Mr Flint himself, to whose authority no such exception can be taken, speaks so in relation to these revivals, as to throw great doubt on many of the representations which have been given of them. "One general trait," he says on one occasion, "appears to me strongly to characterize this region in a religious point of view. They are anxious to collect a great many people and preachers, and achieve, if the expression may be allowed, a great deal of religion at once, that they may lie by, and be exempt from its rules and duties, until the regular recurrence of the period for replenishing the exhausted stock. Hence much appearances, and seeming frequent meetings, spasms, even

fallings, faintings, and what I imagine will be a new aspect of religious feeling to most of my readers, *the religious laugh*. Nothing is more common at those scenes, than to see the more forward people indulging in what seemed to me an idiot and spasmodic laugh, and when I asked what it meant, I was told it was the holy laugh. Preposterous as the term may seem to my readers, the phrase 'holy laugh' is so familiar to me, as no longer to excite surprize. But in these same regions, and among these same people, morals, genuine tenderness of heart, and capacity to be guided either by reason, persuasion, or the uniform dictates of the gospel, seemed an affecting desideratum."

But even waiving this view of the subject, and admitting these revivals to have been just as they are described, we would ask, what connection have they with the question of Voluntary Churches? Supposing them to be really the work of God's Spirit, have not these revivals occasionally occurred in America for many years,—have they not been known as well in these Churches which may be said to have been Established, as in those which were not,—and has it not been often proved, that the more wonderful they were, the less likely they were to endure, and that, while we are to set no limits to the operation of God's Spirit, but are to rejoice wherever his fruits are manifested, that it is quite illogical to *generalize* particular instances, and to reason from some peculiar and somewhat miraculous interposition, to God's treatment of the Church, generally, and at all seasons? Besides,

have not revivals been known within the borders of the Establishment? Who has not read of the impressive scenes of Cambuslang? May they not occur in any Church of Christ? And should they not, least of all, be referred to by our opponents in this controversy, in any of whose congregations they have never been publicly known?

The truth is, however, that on the question of Church Establishments, as well as upon other points, America is yet too *young*, as a nation, for any *solid* argument to be furnished by her, but if she is to be referred to at all, the facts connected with her religious history are all subversive of the argument of our opponents. She started, certainly, in no unfavourable circumstances for supplying her people with the knowledge of the gospel, independent of the provision of the State. All will concur in admitting, that, laid by the Puritans of England, the foundations of her religion were laid by gifted and devoted men. Nor, since her separation from the mother country, can she be said to have wanted a fair opportunity for securing, if she could, that religion should make progress. She has enjoyed peace. Travellers tell us she has had a large measure of civil and religious liberty, a cheap diffusion of knowledge, and not in the way of being seduced by the luxuries incident to a high state of civilization. A state of nature had indeed to be encountered, the wilderness and the solitary place to be broken in upon, but the materials of temporal subsistence were by no means scanty. Where health and industry were com-

bined, money was not difficult of acquirement, and had there been but the will, might have been more liberally consecrated to the cause of Christianity. Notwithstanding of all this, however, we have seen what a dismal prospect she at this moment presents, in respect, at least, of religious instruction; and if, in despite of all these favourable circumstances, the system of spontaneous provision has *failed* in that country, we have no cause to expect for it a greater efficiency in any other.

Before quitting this subject, we would observe that it is the opinion of some, who are entitled to great deference on the matter, that the reason of there being, as yet, no Establishment in America, is to be referred, not more to the dislike which there may be to the principle of the State lending its aid to the cause of religion, than to *the endless subdivisions of religious sects*, and to *many of these being nearly balanced in power*; and though there are those who suppose that any attempt to provide the means of regular religious instruction for the multitudinous population scattered over the woods of the west, would be an unwarrantable infringement of the rights of the American citizen, yet many of the people are not so scrupulous on that point as some would have us to imagine. The late Chief-Justice Parson of Massachusetts, in giving judgment in a case of law, took occasion to advert to the objections which had been urged against the Establishment of religion, and, among other things, said this:—
“ That from the genuine temper of the Christian re-

ligion, and from the benevolent character of its Author, we must conclude, that it is His intention that men should be benefited by it, in his civil and political relation, as well as in his individual capacity. And it remains for the objector to prove, that the patronage of Christianity by the Civil Magistrate, induced by the tendency of its priests to form good citizens, is not one of the means by which the knowledge of its doctrines was intended to be disseminated and preserved among the Christian race." Nay, American ministers do receive donations of public money. They avail themselves of the protection of the law for the Sabbath, and the punishment of law for intemperance and swearing. They take, in short, to *promote the purposes of religion*, all that the State is inclined to give them. But just in consequence of the want of an Established Church, and a guarantee given to the State, through the medium of a Confession of Faith, for the public being fed with the manna of incorruptible doctrines, the population is so split into divisions, that all efforts to promote the cause of Christ, on a *national public scale*, are very much checked. "Their country," says Mr Flint, speaking of a people among whom he sojourned for some time near the mouth of the Ohio, "is a fine range for all species of Sectarians, furnishing the sort of people in abundance who are ignorant, bigotted, and think, by devotion to some favoured preacher or sect, to atone for the want of morals and decency, and every thing that appertains to the spirit of Christianity." Hence such a fact as

that which a member of the Legislature of Massachusetts lately asserted in the House of Assembly:—
“ That he was one of a family of twelve, and that among these twelve, were to be found Unitarians, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists, and Catholics; that for himself, he belonged to no particular Church, being a member of the Church of Christ;” and any one who attentively reads the works on this subject that have been published, will have no difficulty in seeing, that towns and districts, which, from their numbers, would be quite able, and perhaps willing, to support a settled pastor, are so divided into parties, and so jealous of each other, that no pastor is provided at all, and the people live and die as Pagans, in a land where Christianity is professed; that this is just one of the unhappy effects resulting from the want of an Establishment, and that not until an Establishment be set up, will the gospel generally lift up her drooping head and prosper, or is there to be looked for any settled order and discipline of religious observances.

The state of the Highlands, in our own country, referred to in the printed Prospectus, affords another illustration of the inefficacy of the principle against which we are contending, and I shall say only a word or two on this *matter* before I conclude, for the history of the Highlanders, in *regard to their moral condition*, is very soon told. Long after the Reformation

had illuminated the Lowlands, Popery, with all her train of evils, darkened and oppressed that people. The state of that now peaceful land, bore in many respects a resemblance to the state of Ireland in recent and *present* times. Even so late as the days of the Covenanters, who were struggling for pure religion and civil liberty in the Lowland districts, it is testified regarding the Highlanders, that they were ignorant and profligate, bloody and ferocious, and in a state little removed from Paganism. Such is not *now* the character of that interesting portion of our countrymen, and though much certainly yet remains to be done for them, much in the way of religious instruction, still more in the department of ordinary education, yet what a contrast are they to what they *once* were, and *how* has the contrast been brought about? Is it upon the *Voluntary* principle that the Highlands have been Christianized? What have our *Dissenting brethren* ever done *for them*? With the exception of a few preaching stations under the care of the Baptist Missionary Society, in some of which there are not more than a mere handful of members; with the exception of a very few in connection with the Associate Synod, and the help which they may have given to the Educational Societies, which may be contributed to by persons of any *denomination*, everything that has been done for the moral and religious improvement of that quarter, has been done by the agency of the Established Church, by the General Assembly securing the pre-

sence of a resident ministry in every parish, where *divine service is carried on in the native tongue*,—by his Majesty's annual donation of £2000, for supplying Missionaries and Catechists in parishes which, owing to their vast extent, could not be *often* visited by the parish minister; by the additional provision lately made by Government of forty new churches and ministers, by the schools under the appointment and superintendence of the General Assembly's Committee, and by the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge,—a society which has been longer in this field than any other, which has done more for it than them all, and which is in one sense *a branch of, and amenable to*, the Established Church.

For this district of the country, with the exceptions I have mentioned, nothing has been done by our Dissenting brethren. And do we blame them for this? We blame them *not*. From *the very nature of the thing* it could not be otherwise. The cause of all this is to be found in the poverty of the population; and in never looking to *that* land as the scene of *their* pastoral labours, and where churches and congregations should be attempted to be raised, they have done nothing but what churchmen themselves *would* and *must* have done in the same circumstances. Forbid it that *we* should ask *them* to do what we should count *unreasonable* if asked from ourselves, but we say, that it is of the very essence of that principle for which our opponents contend, that an indigent population should

be left spiritually destitute, and you will observe, that if the Church revenue were desecrated,—diverted from their present use and thrown into the common stock of secular property, that *if* Establishments were done away with, and the religious institutions of the country left to individual free-will, that then, *in so far as the poor are concerned*, the state of the poor in the Highlands, in relation to what is now done for them by Dissenters, would be, generally speaking, the state of the poor in every parish in the land, in relation to what would be done for them by all. We are willing to concede, that on such a supposition, and in such a state of things, the rich in the *upper* ranks, and the thrifty and thriving in the *middling* walks, might, if inclined, secure to themselves the means of religious instruction, independent of the provisions of the State; but even *with* the benefit of this admission, we say, that the souls of the vast mass of the population would be souls for whom no man cared.

Just owing to the want of a sufficiently extensive Establishment, we have this very state of things exemplified in the present condition of many of our large towns. No one who has had the opportunities of inquiring into it, will dispute the sad moral and spiritual condition of the masses of the poor. The means required for their moral training have not been dealt forth, and they have grown up but to *encrease* that amount of irreligion and ungodliness which *riots* in the midst of us, and which has arrayed itself against

all religious restraint whatever. Now, we ask, if the principle of our opponents were *so efficient* as they tell us it is, How comes such a state to exist at all? If Voluntary benevolence be sufficient for supplying all the spiritual wants that may exist, How are we to account for this spiritual condition of the poor? Our Dissenting fellow-labourers, who have been stationed in the large towns of the land, have, generally speaking, been the choice and the flower of the bodies they represented, many of them *men of talent*, most of them *men of zeal*, interested in the good of their fellow-creatures, and in the prosperity of the Church of Christ. How comes it then, that in our towns there are *any heathen*? Whence is it, that, on the Voluntary Principle, *these* have never yet been reached? It is owing, not to the *men*, but to the *system*, not to any lack of service in them, but just to the want of those resources which we hold it to be the duty of every State to provide. And if it be alleged, that the same want of labour in this walk of usefulness may be charged against the ministers of the Establishment, we freely own that it may, and just for the same cause, just because the State has neglected the people, and by suffering the means for public instruction to keep no pace with the encrease of the population, has failed to secure, that the *whole* should be trained up in the fear of the Lord, to reverence His Sabbaths and his Sanctuaries, as the surest, and the simplest, and the *cheapest* defence of nations. Sure am I, that

in this walk, at present, lies the most effective, and the most satisfactory exercise of patriotism.

Such, then, is that advantage which the Church derives from its connection with the State, with regard to the extension of her means and resources. We have endeavoured to shew, that during the first ages of Christianity, the patronage of civil power was *not* required for the success of the gospel,—that miraculous agency did for her all that was required to *be* done,—that the Church did not become corrupt when she became connected with the State, but that she was corrupt *long before that*,—that her corruptions are to be referred, not either to the want or the existence of that connection, but to the wickedness that is originally in the heart,—that such is, by nature, the indifference of human beings regarding spiritual things, that religious instruction would never be either sought after or provided, if left entirely to the spontaneous efforts of the people,—and that the state of the American Churches, of the Highlands, and of some large towns, afford abundant illustration of this fact.

No doubt the time may come when Establishments shall no longer be required, when, as the poet says, “the Church shall be no longer a vine, in this respect that she clasps about the elm of worldly strength,” and if ever that sight shall be witnessed upon earth, with which the believer anticipates he shall be refreshed above, “that the people will all be righteous,”

when piety shall reign within the hearts of all, and industry secure the means for its service, and grace make men free in the giving of them, then, without the aid of civil favour, the instruction of the gospel will be as diffusive as its high pretensions do deserve. But so long as it is true of human nature, that it regards not the things of its peace, so long as multitudes are seen, while cumbered and careful about many things, yet regardless of the one thing that is needful, the Church may well take what has been sneeringly called "the begged and borrowed" help of potentate authority, and give thanks and sing praises when her Great Head puts such a thing *as this* into the *King's* heart "to beautify the House of the Lord which is in Jerusalem."

THE END.

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LECTURE VII.

THE ADVANTAGE WHICH THE CHURCH DERIVES
FROM AN ALLIANCE WITH THE STATE, IN THE
INDEPENDENCE OF HER MINISTERS.

AN alliance with the State secures to the Church of Christ *three* signal advantages. 1st, It secures to her a protected Sabbath, on which to bring into full and undisturbed operation all her means and resources. 2dly, It affords a reasonable security that her salutary influence shall not be confined to such districts only as are able and willing to pay for religious instruction, but shall be extended over the whole length and breadth of a land. And, 3dly, It tends to place her ministers on a vantage ground for the faithful discharge of the duties of their office, which is denied to those who are dependent on their flocks for the means of subsistence.

It is the *last* of these advantages which the present

Lecturer has been requested to expound. And if he ventures to bespeak attention to it as a point, which, though it has hitherto received less prominence in the controversy, is not inferior in importance to either of the preceding, it is because he believes that it will be found, on examination, to have not only a close and inseparable connection with these other advantages, but a direct and important bearing on the whole subject of discussion.

It would seem a point about which there can be no dispute, that, of all the elements that go to the constitution of an efficient and well-conditioned Church, the most indispensable is a high-principled and devoted clergy. Indeed, you have only to reflect on the duties of the clerical office,—their nature, their number, and their important bearings upon all the other departments of the Church-constitution, to be satisfied that almost every thing depends upon the manner in which *they* are discharged. Of what avail, comparatively, is it, that you have a protected Sabbath, if you have not also a clergy able and ready to take advantage of the clear space thereby afforded them for erecting and plying the machinery of the gospel. Of what avail is it, that you have a Christian Sanctuary in every parish and corner of the land, if you have not also a faithful ministry to render it effectual to the high end for which it is planted. The doctrinal standards of your Church may be never so scriptural, but unless you have a clergy who will faithfully and earnestly expound them, they must remain a dead letter.

Your books of policy may be never so perfect, but unless you have a clergy who will impartially administer them, they are not worth more than the paper on which they are written. In a word, a Church without a body of pious and devoted ministers, let it be never so well and richly appointed in other respects, is a piece of machinery without its moving power—an arch without the keystone which consolidates and crowns it.

But, if such high importance attach to the clerical character, a proportionate importance must necessarily belong to every thing which is fitted materially to affect or modify that character. If the efficiency of the whole Church-constitution be thus suspended on the efficiency of her ministers, it must be of vast moment to surround the latter with such circumstances as are adapted to promote their faithfulness, and to keep them clear from the pressure of such as are fitted to obstruct it. Whatever has a tendency to strengthen their hands, must be a benefit to be greatly desired;—whatever has a tendency to hinder or hamper them in the discharge of duty, must be an evil to be anxiously deprecated. Now, of all the external things which are likely to affect the clerical character, for good or evil, it is probably impossible to specify one of greater influence than that which the subject of the present Lecture brings before us—the mode of clerical maintenance. Constituted as man is, he cannot, in any circumstances, be indifferent to a subject which so closely concerns him as the maintenance of himself or family in comfort and respectability.

And it implies no reflection or censure on the minister of religion to assume, that a matter which all men consider important,—which many make it the whole business of their lives to secure, which none but fanatics profess to disregard,—should occupy a large place in his thoughts, and consequently, exert no inconsiderable influence in moulding and colouring his views and feelings and pursuits.

The question, therefore, in what manner the clergy shall be supported, has an intimate and most important bearing on the all-momentous question of their faithfulness. It is a question, not of secondary, but of vital importance.* And if, on a comparison of the systems for maintaining the clergy, which are contended for by the advocates of State-Endowments and of the Voluntary principle respectively, it be found, that the one operates on the clerical character in a manner altogether diverse from the other,—that the one tends to equip the minister all the better for faithfulness, while the other tends only to

* Some of the Voluntary churchmen may possibly sneer at the idea of such a purely secular thing, as ministerial support, being of vital importance to the existence and efficiency of the Church of Christ. But the sneer comes with a bad grace from men who, if we may judge from the title they give to their favourite institutions, merge every thing connected with the Church in the mere matter of maintenance. They call their anti-establishment clubs "*Voluntary Church Associations*," while what they mean to describe, as has been truly remarked, is not Churches at all, but merely the mode of their support.

fetter and embarrass him in the performance of duty; the conclusion deducible from such a result, will obviously be one which must of itself, independently of all other considerations, go far to settle the whole Church controversy. The great Head of the Church could never have designed to commit the maintenance of his ministers exclusively to a system which tends to defeat the very end of their appointment; He cannot but approve of a system which is calculated to fit and furnish them all the more effectually for attaining that end.

Now, there are many considerations which would seem to put it beyond dispute, that a minister who possesses a fixed and adequate endowment, is in far more favourable circumstances for the faithful discharge of his sacred duties, than a minister who looks for daily bread to the voluntary contributions of his flock.

1. An endowed minister is less open than a dependent minister to *the suspicion of being actuated by sordid motives*. A subsistence independent of his flock, places a minister on the same vantage-ground, in this respect, which Paul possessed in virtue of his ability to labour with his hands, and of the supplies transmitted to him by distant and foreign churches. And if the Apostle coveted the attitude of unsuspected disinterestedness, which he was hereby enabled to maintain,—if he declined support from the Corinthian Church, “lest he should hinder the gospel of Christ,”—if he accounted it matter of self-gratulation, that

“ when he preached the gospel to them, he made it without charge ;” there seems to be no good reason why an *independence*, analogous to that which he rejoiced in, should not still be desirable, or why a *dependence* similar to that which he so anxiously eschewed, should not still be inexpedient.

2. An endowed minister is not under the same temptation as a dependent minister, to *anxiety about his worldly condition*. Exemption from care and distraction of mind is obviously essential to the cheerful and efficient discharge of ministerial duty. Yet, how can a man enjoy such exemption, whose income is not merely scanty and contingent, but entirely dependent on his health and popularity. While youth and strength remain he may have little to fear ; but who shall ensure him a full congregation when sickness lays him aside, or when age enfeebles his powers ? However sincere his piety therefore, however elevated his general principles of action, a minister cannot in such circumstances but recur often and anxiously to the worldly prospects of his family. And though we will not take up the ill report against our Dissenting brethren, which alleges that an unendowed minister never looks forth from his pulpit upon his congregation without bethinking him of *seat-rents* ; yet it would be a mere affectation of charity not to maintain, that the effect of his dependent condition must be to surround him with many temptations to over-carefulness, from which an adequate fixed endowment would entirely exempt him.

3. An endowed minister is less exposed than an

unendowed minister to *loss of character and comfort from "popular tyranny."* * An endowed minister is not indeed, and, unless devoid of one of the strongest principles of human nature, cannot be, indifferent to the opinion, or inaccessible to the influence of his flock ; nor is it desirable that he should be altogether exempt from the control of an opinion and influence, which when kept within legitimate bounds, is fitted to operate as a cogent subordinate motive to the discharge of duty. But it is the unhappiness of the unendowed minister, that he is too closely pressed upon by popular control. If there is a tendency in a congregation to be exacting and dictatorial,—and where is the congregation in which there may not be found unreasonable men?—this tendency is not likely to be abated by the consciousness that they hold in their hands the purse-strings of their minister: And if they should, therefore,

* This somewhat harsh expression is adopted on the authority of one of the most violent of the Voluntary churchmen themselves,—the Reverend T. Binney of London, who has acquired some notoriety from his declaration, that our Church Establishment "destroys more souls than it saves." Speaking of the treatment which Dissenting ministers often receive from their flocks, Mr B. makes these admissions :—"With the consciousness of a minister, as 'their servant for Christ's sake,' many are disposed to think him such for their own, and to occasion disorder by unreasonable demands on his time, attention, and *docility*. The freedom from priestly domination, laid as the basis of the system, will excite at times such a feeling of independence, as will expand into something like *popular tyranny*."

sometimes insist upon his making sacrifices which, though not perceived by them to be such, are most humiliating to an independent mind,—if they should require him to attend to suggestions and criticisms which he feels to be as preposterous as they are uncalled for,—if, by a thousand petty and indescribable indignities, they should make him feel *his* dependence and *their* power, this is perhaps no more than is to be expected from a nature, whose rarest endowment is the ability to exercise power aright. But what becomes of the *character* of the unhappy minister all the while? Or, if his independent mind will not brook servility, what becomes of his *comfort*? Alas, it is to be feared that not a few of the youthful pastors, whose untimely death and eminent piety the annals of Dissent record, sink into the grave, worn down and overborne by the petty vexations and annoyances of a condition, which incessantly jars with their delicate and sensitive temperaments.

4. A *fourth* and still greater advantage of the endowed over the unendowed minister is, that he has not the same inducement to *accommodate his message and ministrations to the prejudices and humours of his flock*. There are not wanting, indeed, even under the endowed system, temptations to consult the wishes rather than the wants of a flock. “The fear of man,” is, of itself, apart from every adventitious enhancement, a powerful disturbing force in the performance of ministerial duty; and that minister must enjoy a happy exemption from the ordinary infirmities of human na-

ture, who does not know and *feel*, that to preach doctrines which we know to be unpalatable to the influential among our flocks,—to expose their errors of opinion,—to expostulate with them on their sins of practice, and to make the discipline of the Church bear impartially upon them, is, in any circumstances, a trying duty,—a duty which calls for strength alike of purpose and of principle,—a duty which nothing but an imperious sense of obligation will nerve a man fully and unswervingly to perform. But it is obvious, that you enhance ten-fold the power of this temptation to unfaithfulness, if you make the minister dependent for subsistence on those whom he is bound to “reprove, rebuke, and exhort” with all authority. It is a severe enough ordeal for a minister who knows anything of the disturbance that arises from the treachery of flesh and blood, to be called to remonstrate against the sins of wealthy and influential and educated men, even when his temporal comfort is wholly independent both of their frown and their favour : But it must be very martyrdom to have to perform such a task, when the hazard of crippling his income is superadded to the task of crucifying his inclinations. The Voluntary system, therefore, necessarily forces its minister, in this respect, into an unfair and false position ; it places him in circumstances in which his duty and his worldly interest must often clash, instead of habitually coinciding ; it calls upon him to unite in his own person, relationships which are, at least in the case of a matter so offensive to corrupt human nature as the gospel of Christ, anta-

gonist and incompatible,—the relationship of authority over a people, with the relationship of dependence on the same people. And he must be a man, therefore, of almost superhuman virtue, if he is never drawn aside from the path of duty, nor betrayed into some unworthy accommodation to the taste or wishes of his people. It is universally admitted, that the interests of justice are promoted by an arrangement which makes Judges independent of the suitors who appear at their bar;—the nature of the case would seem to require, that a similar independence should be secured to a clergy, whose duty is not to represent the opinions, or the interests, of the persons over whom they are placed, but to teach them, and that under the sanction of the most solemn oaths, what they ought to think and what they ought to do,—to expose their errors, and to remonstrate against their vices.

5. An endowed minister has not the same temptation to *stoop to artifice and questionable expedient, in order to maintain his ascendancy over his flock*. I do not, indeed, assert that endowed ministers never employ unworthy means to strengthen their influence, and preserve their popularity; and I am far from affirming that unendowed ministers uniformly, or even generally, resort to them. I speak simply of the comparative tendencies of the two systems; and I think it must be evident to every thoughtful mind, that, while the one system affords no temptation whatever to artifice and dexterous management, the other is beset with such temptations. Why, every thing that concerns the

external comfort of an unendowed minister depends upon the influence which he possesses over his people,—the estimation in which they hold his character and talents,—the value they set by his services. And how, then, can he be exempt, *at least from the temptation* to devise expedients on which to rest and strengthen his claims to their attachment and submission? Nor, if he has unhappily yielded to the temptation to unfaithfulness, already described, can it be any great marvel, though he should yield also to this. A minister who has once so far lost sight of what is due to his Master and himself, as to cause the Gospel trumpet to give an uncertain sound in order to avoid the risk of offending his people, has only another step to take in the downward road, in order to perfect himself for adopting every expedient for maintaining his influence, which self-interest may prompt, or circumstances may favour; and if what is thus suggested by self-interest is further sanctioned by the example of other individuals of the same *status* and sphere, the probability is extreme, that he will be drawn, without the slightest suspicion of its unlawfulness, or a single compunctious visiting, into a course of conduct which, but for the bias under which he beholds it, would stand before his eyes legibly marked with the brand of meanness and dishonour. The case of the notorious Huntingdon, who, when he wanted a carriage and pair to bear him smoothly along the streets of the metropolis, prayed to God for them in the face of his congregation, is, of course, an extreme one. But

the temptation which induced this sorry mountebank to stoop to such mean mendicity is, in its essence, inseparable from the dependence which Voluntarism exacts of its ministers. And if unworthy devices for ensuring their ascendancy over their flocks are not frequent among the Dissenting Clergy; if they are not generally in the habit of propping up their own reputation by depreciating the character and labours of others; of sowing dissensions among families, by infusing the seeds of noxious proselytism; of strengthening dislike to the Established Church,* “by feeding in vulgar minds an ignorant contempt of its clergy;” of fostering, instead of combatting, that spirit of exclusive self-estimation and Pharisaic contempt for others, which has in all ages been a main bulwark of sectarianism;—the gratifying fact must be placed to the credit, not of a system of which such things seem to be only the native fruit, but of the high-toned principle which enables them to rise superior to its temptations.

* One of the organs of the Dissenters—the Eclectic Review—admits, that “pure attachment to Dissenting principles requires to be kept up, in certain minds, by a *keen hatred*, and now and then a *little round abuse of the Church*.” How far the cry, that all Establishments are Anti-christian, has been got up as a new means of detaining the people in the chains of Dissent, now that the old means of doing so by abuse of the Church and the clergy is fast disappearing before the visible improvements in our Establishments, is a question which many may probably think it not difficult to answer.

6. An endowed minister has, finally, less temptation than a dependent minister to *lord it over men's consciences*. Priestly domination is, indeed, the very antipodes of priestly subserviency; and the assertion, therefore, that the system which is least favourable to the latter system is also least favourable to the former, and *vice versa*, may, at first, stagger such as have not reflected on the subject. But there can be no reasonable doubt that here, as in many other instances, the "extremes meet." That an endowment offers no temptation to lord it over God's heritage, seems as clear as that it offers no temptation to succumb to it. In truth, an endowed minister has no interest in doing either the one or the other. The effect of his endowment is, that it enables him to look upon his people in the one and commanding light of a flock which he is bound to teach and feed; and if he exercise lordship over them, therefore, as unquestionably he may do, (just as he *may* do many other wicked and wanton things,) it must result from other causes; it cannot by any possibility arise from his being endowed. But can the same assertion be made of the dependent minister? It cannot. In order to render the Voluntary system fully available, as a source of maintenance, it is, as already remarked, indispensable that the minister shall appear to his flock to be a personage of some importance; and accordingly, it is not the least of the evils of his position, that he is not unfrequently tempted to ape an importance to which he has no intrinsic claim. Now, what is this but just the rudi-

ments of spiritual domination? Being necessitated to maintain an elevated position in the eyes of his people, it becomes a mere question of expediency what mode he shall adopt of doing it. And if he find that novelties of doctrine or of administration will do it better than tricks of rhetoric, or that an appeal to their bigotry or their superstition will be of more effect than an address to their judgment or their charity, what is there to prevent him from attempting to add to the honour of commanding their admiration, the still more equivocal honour—of lording it over their consciences. Nor, after all, is there a very wide interval between the extreme of subserviency to which he is tempted on the one side, and the extreme of domination to which he is tempted on the other. None are so arrogant, when opportunity serves, as the ridden. Abjectness and insolence are usually inmates of the same bosom. And if a people, therefore, constrain their pastor to slavish subserviency on some points, what is to be expected but that he should strive to lord it over them in others. If he cannot rule their purses according to his wishes or his necessities, why may he not seek to govern their consciences? Such is the natural reaction of the human mind: And if the subjection of their consciences to his dictation further happen to be subservient alike to his love of power and to his pecuniary advantage, the temptation is all the stronger to indemnify himself by domination in one direction for subserviency in another.

Such are the advantages,—indirect and negative,

but still most important advantages,—which an endowed clergy would seem to possess over a dependent clergy for the faithful discharge of their sacred duties. Nor am I aware of any material evils inherent in the system of endowments, on account of which it is necessary to make any considerable deduction from these advantages. It is alleged, indeed, that a State-Endowment has a tendency to make the clergy *indolent* and *time-serving*. But on what solid grounds? As to the charge of *indolence*, it is obvious that, if an endowment tempt to this evil at all, it can do it only in a *negative* and *unobtrusive* manner. While it is the misfortune of the unendowed minister to be *constantly* assailed with temptations to the infractions of duty formerly described, inasmuch as he is surrounded at every step with memorials of that dependent condition which constitutes his temptation, the endowed minister is placed in such a situation, that the thought of emolument need scarcely ever occur to him. There is no part of his duty that necessarily reminds him of it; and the temptation to inactivity, therefore, which his fixed emolument is alleged to supply, instead of constantly soliciting his notice, must be sought after and courted before it can obtain the mastery over him. Besides, indolence is an evil of far readier discovery and easier correction than any of those which flow from the dependence of ministers. An efficient Church Discipline may easily devise checks that shall neutralize it; while a flock are in general not slow to perceive and to condemn it. And even supposing

both these checks to fail, there remain behind a regard to reputation, a spirit of salutary rivalry, and the influence of public opinion, all of which are fitted to operate powerfully on every man who is not sunk in incurable supineness. But even supposing it true, that an endowment has a tendency to relax industry, what, after all, is this evil compared with those which the Voluntary system of maintenance tends to foster? A lukewarm and careless minister is an evil; but he is harmless compared with a minister who, for a bit of bread, perverts the truths of the gospel, and panders to the prejudices of the people. The former *may*, no doubt, leave the great end of the gospel and of his office unachieved; but it is the unhappiness of the latter that he is tempted to pervert the one and prostitute the other. The former *may* withhold from the sinking patient the elixir of life; but it is the infelicity of the latter that he is tempted to apply to his lips a deadly poison.

And then with respect to the other alleged drawback to an endowment, that it fosters *a spirit of servility to the State*, I will make bold to affirm, that it is still less applicable than the former, nay, that it is wholly inapplicable. I affirm not, indeed, that an endowed clergy may not truckle to men in power, neither do I affirm that they have never truckled to such men: But this I affirm, that, supposing them to be, as some of our Dissenting brethren would have the people believe—a body of serviles,—their subserviency does not, and cannot, arise from their endowment; and this I affirm for the *two* following reasons:—

I affirm it, in the *first* place, on the authority of the very persons who have of late been the loudest in blazoning the charge—the United Secession Voluntaries; for though these men are well aware that a large portion of their brethren in Ireland hold a partial endowment from the State, they never whisper a syllable, in either their Presbyteries or Synod, about the remissness in duty and the risks of servility to which these brethren are thereby exposed;—a thing which surely! could not be, if they *believed in their hearts*, that the effect of an endowment is to make ministers the minions of the Government and the enemies of the people. And I affirm it, in the *second* place, on the ground that the terms on which the Church accepts an endowment from the State are, or ought to be, such as provide most amply for the political independence of her ministers. The only alliance between Church and State for which we contend, is an alliance which preserves *unaffected* the reciprocal independence of both societies—which insures to both all the benefits of union, without exposing either to any of the evils of compromise. And if such be the conditions on which a clergy holds an endowment, where, I beseech you, is the possible temptation to subserviency? Nor is such a stipulated independence a mere hypothesis,—it is enjoyed by the clergy of the Church of Scotland! Is it not a fact, that our clergy hold their emoluments by a charter, which guarantees their untrammelled freedom from all controul, save that of the Church herself? Is it not matter of his-

tory, that our clergy once resisted even unto the death, when the State tried to infringe on the conditions of their charter, and nobly relinquished their endowment, rather than hold it on terms incompatible with freedom? And, despite of all the clamour that is ignorantly raised on platform and in pulpit, about the suppleness and servility of the ministers of the Establishment, may it not be fearlessly affirmed that there are at this hour in the National Church, faithful servants of Christ, who would again, were it needful, make the same noble stand, and incur the same fearful penalties for the Christian liberty of that Church, which they account not the State's slave, but "Christ's freed-man?"

Upon the whole, then, the advantages of the system of endowment would seem to be but little, if at all, affected by the drawbacks which are alleged to adhere to it. And we may hold it, therefore, to be a point as firmly established as abstract reasonings on the probable tendencies of the two competing systems can establish it, that an adequate fixed endowment is immeasurably superior as a mode of securing a pious and faithful priesthood, to the plan of Voluntary liberality; that it presents to a *good* man fewer temptations to deviate from his onward path of quiet usefulness; that it affords a *bad* man fewer means and facilities of doing injury to the Church and the cause of Christ.

II. The most irksome and invidious part of my task

yet remains—that of verifying by an appeal to the practical working of the Voluntary system, the more startling of the preceding conclusions.

That the working of the Voluntary system is only and uniformly evil, is, of course, not maintained; neither is it meant for a moment to deny, that there are many unendowed ministers who are as free from the subserviency and ambition which the system is supposed to cherish, as the best of their more favoured brethren. The temptations to these things which the Voluntary system presents, though urgent, are not insurmountable; nor can it reasonably excite surprise, though high Christian principle should often enable a man to overcome them, or though auspicious circumstances should intercept him from their influence. Some Dissenting ministers possess private endowments, which isolate them in some measure from the temptations incident to their position; others have bonds for stipends, which place them in a similar situation; a third class are the pastors of old and flourishing congregations, where respect for the minister, and regular payment of seat-rents, have descended as an heir-loom from generation to generation; whilst a fourth who enjoy none of these advantages, possess an ample compensation for them in those commanding powers of mind and eloquence, which, in the rare instances in which they are found, are certain to beget in a people an honest pride in the superior talents of their minister, and to protect him from their caprice, by ensuring him, at any time, “a new situation and an adequate stipend.”

Altogether, there are many conceivable causes by which the evils of the Voluntary system may, in particular cases, be neutralized or mitigated. And our position, therefore, that it is in the main a system pregnant with vast evil to the Clergy and the Church, is in no degree disproved by the fact, which we are most ready and happy to acknowledge, that there are among all sections of Evangelical Dissenters, many ministers who not only adorn their sacred profession by their sterling worth and unostentatious usefulness, but live apparently in independent and amicable intercourse with their flocks,—grow in the attachment and reverence of their people as they grow old in their service, and are “followed to the grave by their respectful and fervent regret.”

Instances of occasional, or frequent, superiority to the temptations of the system are, however, no proof either of the non-existence or of the impotency of these temptations. And it may still be true, as a matter of history that its operation on the character of the clergy and the interests of pure religion is substantially, and upon the whole, unfavourable.

1. In proceeding to illustrate the practical working of the system by a reference to history, it is natural to begin with the case which is most surrounded with checks, and, therefore, *least* likely to fortify our doctrine,—the case of Dissenting ministers in the close vicinity of an Establishment. Notwithstanding all that the Voluntaries assert to the contrary,—notwith-

standing their representations of the Established Church as a species of Upas, which sheds malignant influence on all the fair and modest Voluntary plants around it, there can be no reasonable doubt that the presence of a well regulated Establishment is highly favourable to the purity of Dissenting Churches. An Establishment, no doubt, cripples the operation of the Voluntary system; but it cripples only the evil tendencies of the system; it cripples nothing that is beneficial. Its clergy prepare the way for Voluntary Churches, by teaching men the elements of the gospel; for Dissent delights not in breaking up the fallow ground, but in dividing and appropriating the fertile vineyard. Its emoluments present a standard of clerical income, which stimulate, or shame, the Dissenting people into something like liberality to their teachers, and so save the latter from the temptation of resorting to those high-pressure modes of exciting *spontaneous* liberality which flourish in purely Voluntary countries. Its doctrinal standards offer a "form of sound words," which gives a colour to the tenets of rival sects, and restrains within bounds the wildness of fanaticism. Its temperate and impartial discipline presents a similar pattern, which also operates insensibly upon their modes of administration, and tends to rein in the fury of priestly domination.* In short, an Establish-

* Any one may satisfy himself of the justice of these remarks, by comparing the state of religious opinion in this country, where there is an Establishment, with that of the

ment supplies the very controul which is needful to keep in check the vagaries and wantonness of Dissenterism. And if this latter system be but lean and ill-favoured, even when thus aided by the stimulus of an Establishment, there can be little doubt that its plight would become still worse if it succeeded, as its admirers fondly hope and desire, in pulling down the Establishment. Like the lean kine in Pharoah's vision when they had devoured the fat and well-favoured kine, it would remain even more lean and ill-favoured than before. Our *first* instance, therefore, brings before us the working of the system under peculiar mitigations; and if we find, even here, evidence unequivocal of its tendency to deteriorate the clerical character, we shall have a proof all the stronger of its innate powers of mischief, and be all the better prepared for its more startling manifestations under a different order of things.

Now, even here, we find an instance, and *that* too on a large scale, of one of the most disastrous of the alleged tendencies of the Voluntary system,—its tendency to tempt and train the clergy to habits of duplicity and dissimulation. In remind-

United States of America, where the Voluntary principle is allowed to range unimpeded. While in this country, the sects are comparatively few, and, in general, orthodox in their sentiments, in the United States they are almost countless, and of all shades of extreme opinion. Here the most flourishing sects are those which hold the doctrines of the Establishment, there the most dangerous heresies are the most rampant.

ing you that a large section of the ministers of the Secession adopted, about the time of the first French Revolution, a new set of opinions on the subject of the magistrate's power about religion, I do not ask, what led them to espouse sentiments so inconsistent with their former professions and subscriptions ; neither do I venture to arraign their motives, or question their conscientiousness in the matter. But I ask pointedly,—and I request you to note the question,—what were the expedients to which they had recourse in order to bring over their congregations to the same views ? Did they come forth to their people and frankly and boldly announce their change of sentiment ? Did they say to them from their pulpits, and in their church courts, “ We have ceased to hold the Secession principles, which at our ordination we swore to maintain : We are now convinced, that the Fathers of the Secession were mistaken in holding Church Establishments to be lawful, and wrong in binding their successors to follow out their appeal to ‘ the first free, faithful, and reforming General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.’ *We have got new light ; we are no longer Seceders ; and if you still adhere to your original principles, why then, we cannot, as honest men, any longer eat the bread of the Secession, or stand to you in the relation of pastors ?*” This was the course which men of godly simplicity might have been expected to take ; but was this the course which these “ new light ” ministers pursued ? Let their recorded actings answer the question.

The subject was brought before the Burgher Synod so early as 1795 by a petition, which set forth, that there were in the Body many ministers who held these Anti-Secession principles, and which prayed that the Synod would alter the Confession of Faith and Formula, so as to "render them more consistent with the sentiments of *all* the ministers" of the body. On receiving this petition, the Synod appointed a committee of their number to bring in an Overture to unite brethren in their sentiments. And accordingly an Overture was prepared, and ordered to be printed and circulated, which, in substance, recommended that forbearance should be exercised on the subject in dispute, and that license and ordination should be granted indiscriminately to those who held, and to those who repudiated the new opinions. So far all was well; and had the people of the Burgher Secession been unanimous on the subject, it could not have excited our wonder though they had resolved to expunge part of their doctrinal standards, and cancel the leading questions of the Formula. But the Secession people were strenuously opposed to these innovations, or, as they called them, defections of their clergy; and hence arose the difficulty to the latter as well as the temptation to disingenuousness. The decided tone of the people's remonstrances convinced the clergy that any attempt to carry their Overture at that period, would only rouse their congregations into a flame; and so, "as if guided by a sense of returning duty, they affected to dismiss it, and to fall from its

demands.”* But their ostensible abandonment of the point, was a mere pretext to quiet the people. They determined to carry covertly and by cautious management what they could not secure by open and straightforward policy. In place of the obnoxious Overture, they introduced an interpretation of the Formula, in the shape of a preamble to it, which still left them at liberty to license and ordain persons who held Voluntary sentiments. And in order to lull the suspicions of the people in regard to their ultimate designs, they shortly afterwards caused a Synodical address to be drawn up and circulated, in which they declared that their adherence to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Church of Scotland was in no ways changed by the new preamble to the Formula; and that it was a base calumny to say that they had abandoned their avowed principles, or that they contemplated any ulterior innovations.—And so the people of the Secession were made to believe that their teachers were as true as themselves to the original principles of the Body! when, in point of fact, these teachers had virtually cancelled a whole chapter of their principal standard,—the Confession of Faith,—and were only waiting till the gradual spread of the new opinions among the people,—which they determined strenuously, but cautiously, to prosecute,—should ren-

* See three admirable papers in the *Church of Scotland Magazine*, entitled “Origin and Progress of Voluntaryism in the Secession,” from the pen of an aged Secession minister,—the Rev. Mr Taylor of Perth.

der it safe for them to make an unreserved avowal of their principles. It is needless to follow out the history. This plan of hoodwinking a plain and unsuspecting people, whose chief fault was unbounded confidence in their spiritual guides,—of carrying by finesse and intrigue what could not be carried openly, without the risk of scattering their congregations,—has succeeded, as every one knows, to admiration: And, though there are still both elders and members of the United Secession who are startled when you tell them that their Church does not now hold the *whole* Confession of Faith to be binding, and that the questions put at the ordination of ministers admit of a two-fold interpretation, so that there may be “room and verge enough” for “tender consciences;” and though the Synod itself, in that spirit of *canny* management by which all its proceedings are said to be distinguished, has been scrupulously careful not to commit itself to any formal approval, or disapproval, of the reckless course which many of its members are pursuing in regard to Church Establishments; yet it can hardly be doubted, that the “New Light” principles *now* pervade a vast majority of the people as well as of the pastors of the United Secession, and that the Body is all but ripe for still more startling deviations from Presbyterian and Seceding principles.*

* The growing dislike of the Voluntary Seceders to the Sacramental Fast-days, &c. which their fathers so greatly prized,—their solicitude to unite with Independents, whose

Now, what I have to ask is, Would this juggling system of concealment and dissimulation have been resorted to, had these ministers been independent of their respective congregations for the comforts and necessities of life? Would such disingenuous arts have been fallen upon, had these men not been afraid of alienating and driving from their communion, many whose favour and support, aye, and *seat-rents*, could ill be spared? The charity that "hopeth all things" will be glad to make the only excuse for such crafty policy which the case admits of, even the excuse that their "*necessity*, and not their *wills*, consented." But even this, the most charitable interpretation of their conduct, is fatal to the Voluntary system; for it forces on us the conclusion, that such dependence as that system exacts, is too strong a temptation for a body of men to be exposed to, whose duty is to be ensamples of transparent candour, and "godly sincerity."

2. If the effect of the Voluntary plan for the sup-

Church polity their standards condemn, and with the Relief Body, whom their testimonies repudiate,—are straws which indicate the direction of the *movement*. Nor are there wanting signs of change in doctrine as well as in government. What would the worthy and orthodox Seceders of the last generation have said, had an individual been put into their chair of Systematic Theology, who was avowedly Un-Calvinistic in some of his views, and had been allowed to sign the Confession of Faith with a reservation on this head?

port of a Christian Ministry, is to deteriorate thus lamentably the clerical character, even when its evil tendencies are counter-worked by the presence of an Established Church, it is to be expected, that its effects will be still more disastrous, when it is free to disport itself, unimpeded by every such obstruction. Accordingly, if we now pass from Scotland to Ireland, and examine the state of the Popish priesthood in those districts of the latter, where the Protestant Establishment is a dead letter—an absentee, like the Protestant landowners who support it—we shall find a still more decided proof of the tendency of the Voluntary scheme to foster both *Domination* and *Subserviency*.

The *Domination* of the Irish priesthood over a people who regard them as holding the keys of heaven and hell, is evinced, by the grinding exactions to which they persuade men to submit, who are, in general, miserably poor. Mr Croly, himself a Romish priest, and, therefore, an unexceptionable witness, admits, in the most explicit terms, in his remarkable pamphlet on Ecclesiastical Finance, that the effect of the dependence of the priests upon their flocks, is to convert them into mere hirelings, whose sole study is, to devise pretexts for extorting money from the poor. Every rite of religion is rendered subservient to the exaction of money; rites are multiplied without end, that sources of revenue may be multiplied. If you go to “*a station of Confession*,” where a few contiguous families assemble to confess their sins, and receive ab-

solution, you are almost certain to find, not a scene of religious solemnity, but a scene of scandalous altercation about the price of the rite. "No pay, no pater-noster," is the maxim uniformly acted upon. If you attend a *Marriage*, you find the same desecration of what both priest and people deem a holy service. Nothing is done until a secure bargain has been struck about the fee. And if, as not unfrequently happens, the people are niggardly, or evasive, in respect to the priest's demands, the probability is, that instead of a marriage, you shall have, first, a scene of mutual and bitter recrimination, and finally, an open brawl. The *Sacrament of Baptism* is also a source of revenue; admission to it depending, not upon the spiritual state of the candidate, but upon the amount of the christening-money. It is the same with *Masses*, whether for the living or the dead. And even that last rite of superstition which the benighted Papists deem so essential to their salvation, the *Extreme Unction* of the dying, has its price. Let the sufferings of the unhappy patient be never so severe, and his destitution never so extreme—let him cry for the last act of his religion, as for a drop of cold water to cool his parched tongue, he must die unshrived and unanointed, unless himself or his friends can produce the stipulated fee. The flinty-hearted priest will depart from the house, leaving the disconsolate man to his fate, unless his fingers first touch the hard-wrung payment. In short, there is no limit to the demands of the Irish priest, and no end to his

contrivances for raising money. Not only does he rob the people during the whole of their lives, but his exactions follow them beyond the closed grave. There must be "holy clay" to bury with their bodies, and purchased prayers to help their souls out of purgatory. Nor may a priest-ridden people refuse or resist the exaction. A call from the altar—the malison of the Church—the various expedients of ghostly intimidation, are spells for the cure of reluctant "Voluntary liberality," far too potent for a superstitious and benighted populace to vanquish.

Nor is the tendency of dependence on the people to foster *Subserviency* less decisively verified by the state of the Irish priesthood. The same priest that so lords it over his flock in matters Ecclesiastical is generally their very slave in matters of civil politics. The political condition of the Catholic population of Ireland, has been, unhappily, of late, too much before the public to render any detailed account of it necessary here. Their murders and incendiarism—their death's-heads, and cross bones—their outbreaks of lawless outrage against all the ties that cement society, are matters of lamentable notoriety. But the interesting question is, What part do the dependent priesthood take in this distempered state of the community? Do they set their faces as flint against the turbulent spirit of their flocks? Do they earnestly inculcate upon them, as men who profess to be ministers of Jesus ought, respect for constituted authority, payment of taxes, obedience to the laws? On the

contrary, not a few of them direct their whole efforts to the task, not of reining in, but of hounding on the misguided multitude ; and even those who, from higher considerations, are disposed at first to do their duty, are forced, at last, from the dread of being cast off by those on whom they are dependent for subsistence, to yield to the current, and to affect approval of what they in their hearts condemn. Now, I ask, would these men act such a part, did they not depend for their maintenance upon a headstrong and reckless multitude ? What but the necessity of humouring a people, who “ hold the strings of the clerical purse,” would lead men, to preach sedition, and sacrilege, and anarchy, who know and believe that religion is intended to cement, not to disorganize society. The servile dependence of the Popish priesthood is thus manifestly the main cause of their political sycophancy, as well as of their spiritual domination. And though we cannot exonerate them from the charge of most sacrilegiously prostituting their office for the sake of filthy lucre, it is but fair to lay its due share of the blame on that “ Voluntary system,” which aggravates tenfold the evils of a superstition which has been truly designed “ the Colossal Curse of Ireland.”

3. If it be objected against the case just described, that it refers to a state of things in the immediate vicinity of an Established Church, if not in actual juxta-position with it ; and that it is not, therefore, an instance, absolutely free and unfettered, of the working of the Voluntary system ; no such exception

can be taken against the case which we adduce as our *last* illustration,—that of the Church during the three first centuries, when, confessedly, there was no Civil Establishment of Christianity to hinder the Voluntary scheme from manifesting “what spirit it is of.” Yet here we find, not only a similar series of results, but even evidence to prove, that a system which aggravates the evils of Popery where it already exists, tends in some good measure, to produce it where it is not.

In the circumstances in which the Church was placed at its first institution, its ministers were necessarily cast for support, on the spontaneous oblations of the Christian people. When the ruling powers of the world were so opposed to Christianity, as to render it necessary for its isolated and persecuted professors to have recourse to a community of goods, it is not surprising that its ministers should have been under the necessity of living upon the common stock. Nor, despite of the doubts * which the Apostles seem to have had about the expedience and safety of a mode of subsistence, that exposed the preachers of the gospel to the suspicion of interested motives in extending the Church, does there appear any good ground for denying, that the system would have wrought sufficiently well, had the members of the Church continued to be all true Christians, and its pastors men of apostolical

* See 1 Cor. ix. 15. 2 Cor. xi. 9–13. 1 Thess. ii. 9. 2 Thess. iii. 8, 9.

simplicity and piety. But it is unhappily of the very essence of the system, that it places both pastor and people under exposure to such temptations, as render their continued purity and piety all but an impossibility. Accordingly, as converts multiplied, all those errors and evils gradually crept in, which seem inseparable from a system that makes it the interest of the minister to care more for the *number* than the *selectness* of his flock. Nor is it difficult to trace, even antecedently to the recognition of the Church by Constantine, not the unsprung seeds merely, but the vegetation and growth of the *Civil Power*, the *secular Wealth*, and the *Anti-Christian Corruptions*, which, at last, according to the natural progress of unreformed abuses, transmuted the simple Christianity of the New Testament, into the monstrous and grotesque abortion of Popery.*

1st. The assumption, on the part of the clergy, of *jurisdiction in civil matters*, which contributed so much to the greatness of the Papacy, had its origin during the operation of the Voluntary system. When Paul recommended to the early Christians to settle their civil differences by referring them to the arbitration of Church members, instead of appealing to the

* Those who wish fully to understand the extent to which the Voluntary principle is responsible for the rise of Romish domination, are referred to the learned and ingenious Treatise on the subject, by the Rev. Mr Gibson, to whom belongs the unquestionable merit of first suggesting and working out this argument.

heathen tribunals, nothing could be farther from his design, than to pave the way for the investiture of the Christian pastors with secular power. Yet such was the result which a corrupt nature, whose tendency is to pervert all that is excellent, speedily achieved. The high opinion entertained by the early Christians of their pastors, not unnaturally directed to the choice of the latter as their arbiters ; nor were the pastors backward to accept an office which, though it probably brought them, in the first instance, no addition of emolument, tended to enhance their importance in the eyes of those on whose good opinion their subsistence depended. The custom, accordingly, of nominating pastors as civil arbiters, came rapidly into vogue. “ The example of one Christian society influenced another, who did not choose to appear deficient in any testimony of esteem for their teachers.” The aversion to the Imperial tribunals, felt by the Church, and encouraged by their guides, operated in the same direction ; and “ time, the greatest of all innovators, at length established the civil jurisdiction of the pastors as a right.”* As the Church increased in numbers and wealth, strife and contention requiring clerical intervention necessarily increased. And as the clergy would never let go what they found so well fitted to maintain their ascendancy, but would, on the contrary, adopt every prudent method of consolidating and extending their power, it cannot surprise us to find men, who assumed the power of civil arbitration in the beginning of the

* Campbell on Ecclesiastical History, Lect. iii.

first century, on the ground of doing a service to their flocks, arrogantly asserting it, in the end of the third, as a part and prerogative of their office.

This disposition of the clergy to encroach on the jurisdiction of the civil magistrate, was, no doubt, greatly augmented by the indiscreet edict of Constantine, which confirmed, and provided for enforcing, every prerogative that the clergy had acquired during the first three centuries ; and it may, no doubt, well be a question, whether the Hierarchy would ever have *fully* succeeded in building up that scheme of gigantic usurpation, which enabled them at last to supersede civil authority altogether, had not Constantine, and his successors, thus suicidally interposed to strengthen a power which it was their duty and interest to palsy. But the unhappy and disastrous policy of the first Christian emperor in this matter, does not render it one whit less the fact, that it was under the working of the Voluntary system that this power grew up, and grew too to such a commanding height, as to arrest the attention and interference of the emperor. Though Constantine reinforced, he did not create it. He confirmed no prerogative in the clergy which did not previously exist. And in enumerating, therefore, the causes which transformed the brotherly interposition instituted by the Apostles into the civil lordship of a dominant hierarchy, we are bound to assign a prominent place to a system, which makes it the interest of the pastor to maintain the ascendant over his flock.

2d. The enormous *wealth* of the Church had also

its source mainly in the same system. For three centuries, there was, of course, no source of Church revenue, except the free-will offerings of its members. But it is a mistake to suppose, that even on the civil Establishment of Christianity by Constantine, the Church received a State Endowment, or was delivered from dependence on voluntary gifts. Constantine was, indeed, liberal as an individual donor to the Church; and in giving a legal sanction to the territorial possessions which it had previously acquired, as well as in granting to his subjects the power of bequeathing property to it, he unquestionably did what laid a secure basis for the continued accumulation of wealth. But neither he, nor his successors for many generations, ever thought of providing a State Endowment. Hallam, an authority that will probably be held to settle the point, affirms, that "the ecclesiastical hierarchy never received any territorial endowment by law, either under the Roman empire, or the kingdoms erected upon its ruins; but the voluntary munificence of princes, as well as their subjects, amply supplied the place of a more universal provision." * As before its legal Establishment, so after it, its riches flowed mainly from the unforced oblations of its votaries. Its endowments were the gifts of private individuals; the estates that sustained the dignity of its various diocessans, were offerings on its altar of those who believed themselves its debtors; and it had princely revenues

* Middle Ages, Vol. II. p. 201.

and considerable landed property before the time of Constantine, as well as afterwards. Even *tithes* were until the twelfth century a free-will contribution enjoined by the Church, but not enforced by the State; for “Charlemagne was the first who gave the confirmation of a civil statute to these ecclesiastical injunctions.”*

“But,” interposes the advocate of Voluntaryism, “how does such an account of the origin of the Church’s wealth, comport with your former assertions about the impotency of the Voluntary principle, as a means of supporting the gospel?” They entirely comport, I reply. Strange as it may appear, the same system, which leaves a comparatively pure Church to droop and die, is prone to pamper a corrupt Church into bloated corpulency. The spontaneous liberality of man, though little to be depended on as a means of supporting pure Christianity, for which indeed there is no natural appetency in our corrupt nature, is almost omnipotent, as a means of upholding a system of faith which flatters human pride, and teaches the efficacy of gifts to expiate offences. And it is only necessary to contrast the form of religion which grew up during the first ages, its aptitude to minister at once to the pride and the peace of apostate man, its pomp and parade to attract the gay, its mortification and penances to please the ascetic, its scholastic subtleties to exercise the learned, its legendary marvels to impose upon the ignorant;—it is only necessary to con-

* Hallam’s Middle Ages, Vol. II. p. 206.

trast this Paganized Christianity with those holy doctrines and self-denying precepts and unambitious rites which are still, with some inconsiderable exceptions, taught, as the gospel of Jesus, in the Dissenting Churches of Britain, in order to understand how it is, that while the Voluntary system is, in the case of the latter, unproductive of even competence to its ministers :” it should have proved, in the former, the means of “killing them with excess of kindness.”

3d. Both the *civil power* and the *secular wealth* which contributed so much to corrupt the clergy, and consequently the Church, were thus the effect, in the first instance, of the unforced contributions of the people. But there must have been some adequate cause to induce the people to adopt and pursue such an infatuated course. Nor does history leave us in any uncertainty with respect to the cause,—unfolding, as it does, *a system of Anti-Christian superstition*, admirably adapted to work upon the fears and feelings, and contrived and employed by a wily priesthood for the very purpose of extorting contributions alike of submission and of property. “Respecting the corruptions of the Church, it would probably be too much to assert,” says an acute historian, “that masses for the release of souls, and the fruitful fable of Purgatory, were actually *invented* for the purpose of enriching the priesthood ; but we need not hesitate to assign *that among the leading causes* of the encouragement which was given to them. The pernicious swarm of superstitious practices, such as

the worship of images, the adoration of saints, and, above all, the demoralizing custom of pilgrimage, was nourished and multiplied *principally with that object*; and the state of the Church affords just grounds for the melancholy reflection, that *the grossest perversions of religious truth were carefully fostered, if they were not actually produced, by the most sordid of human motives.*" *

Now, the interesting question,—and that indeed on which our whole argument turns,—is, what suggested such a system of priestcraft to the clergy of the primitive Church, and tempted them to put it in execution? What, but that dependence on the people for the means of support which obtained, to the exclusion of every other, during the first three centuries, and which continued, though not alone, for nine centuries more? Hampered, as of necessity they often were during the persecutions of the Pagan emperors, by the pressure of straitened circumstances, what so natural as to be-think them of the means of extracting from their flocks a larger and less precarious income. And if they found that the surest and shortest way to secure this in a dark and superstitious age, was to work on the fears of a benighted people,—to open a wide door for the absolution of sins,—to minister to a prevailing love of pomp and pageant, who can wonder, that they should have yielded to the temptation, and propounded doctrines and invented rites which, though opposed to

* Waddington's History of the Church, p. 228.

the simplicity of Christ, came recommended to these unscrupulous men, by their tendency alike to please their flocks and to swell their own resources. I affirm not, indeed, that they formally conceived, in the first century for instance, the whole scheme of delusion which they had well nigh completed by the end of the third. Neither do I assert that they would not themselves have been astounded, had they foreseen that their first step in the course of imposture,—the setting up a claim to miraculous powers, and inventing tales of lying wonder to verify it, which they took almost before the apostles were in the graves,—would, before the end of the third century, be followed up by the forgery of gospels, the appointment of prayers and offerings for the dead, the burning of frankincense in the churches, the celibacy of the clergy, the worship of martyrs, and even the doctrine of Purgatory. No: It is not necessary to suppose them so wicked as to have laid down, from the first, a systematic plan for deluding the people in order to forward their own sordid views: It is more probable that they were led on by circumstances to add gloss to gloss, and rite to rite; led on imperceptibly, often almost unconsciously. But having fairly entered upon the path of imposture, what, I ask, was there to prevent them pursuing it? If one expedient for attracting the veneration or liberality of the people succeeded, why not devise another. If one extravagant legend was implicitly received by a people whose credulity invited imposture, the encouragement was all the

greater to add another still more preposterous.—And so the mass of error and superstition grew apace! Marvel succeeded marvel; one assumption of priestly power followed another; bone was added to bone; sinew followed sinew; and flesh and skin came up upon them; and the breath of Anti-Christian lordship was breathed into the foul abortion; and a kingly crown was put upon its head; and at last there stood forth THE MAN OF SIN,—the wonder and the opprobrium of the world! Yet, in every additional feature that was added to the system of imposture, in every step which the priesthood took in the process of transforming the meek and lowly pastor of the first century into the lordly bishop of the eighth with his imperial purple and his temporal sceptre, what have we presented to us but a renewed proof of the fearful temptation to which a clergy are exposed, who are thrown, in a superstitious age, on the voluntary support of the people?

Such are the disastrous effects of the Voluntary system upon the character of the Christian ministry, as developed by Ecclesiastical History. And is *this* the system which *we* are called upon to adopt, as that which will infallibly ensure the advancement and purity of the Gospel! Is *this* the system to make way for whose unfettered operations we are to take down our venerable Establishments! a system which even under the most powerful checks of an enlightened age and a Protestant country, exerts a most baneful influence on its minis-

ters ; but which, when it has free and untrammelled scope, in a period of ignorance, to develope its native energies, actually tends to convert Christianity itself into an engine, not for demolishing, but for upholding, idolatry and superstition ! I doubt not that many good men who are inconsiderately lending themselves to the cause of the “ Voluntary Churchmen,” expect only good and blessed results from the present crusade against the Protestant Establishments : I doubt not they sincerely believe, that, in pressing for the extinction of Endowments, they are urging forward the cause of truth and virtue and charity ; seeking to remove out of the way what they deem a great let to the universal diffusion of the Gospel, and hastening on the dawn of the millennial day. But all experience of the working of the system in which they confide must be discarded ere their predictions can be received ; the whole course of past history must be reversed ere their anticipations can be shewn to have a shadow of probability. Such persons are toiling, though they know and mean it not, to bring back upon us the reign of popular ignorance and priestly ambition ; they are striving, though they think it not, neither intend it, to advance the cause of that dire Superstition which proves the blight of every land on which it settles,—which fattens on spontaneous offerings, when every purer worship starves,—which is making prodigious strides in “ Voluntary America,”—which is spreading itself more rapidly than any other sect even in Britain,—and which, though it

may flatter Evangelical Dissenters with soft words, and fair professions of liberality, so long as it thinks their exertions likely to further its views, will, when it has obtained the ascendant, “turn again and rend them.” The enemies of our religious Establishments *may* gain their object; they *may* persuade the nation to renounce the God of nations; they *may* bring it to pass, that from the peaceful and secluded valleys of our land the village church and village school shall no longer break refreshingly on the eye of the thoughtful traveller; by means of a populace stimulated to frenzy by fallacious promises of unattainable good, and which has often, in days bygone, rushed to the onset, shouting “Liberty!” while, in reality, forging for itself the chains of bondage, they *may* throw down Institutions, which have been for ages the bulwark of civil and religious freedom. But the Phoenix that will arise from their ashes will be,—not the Millennial Church, with Truth inscribed on its walls, and Salvation on its door-posts, and White-robed Charity as its presiding minister,—No!—but the triple-crowned IMPOSTURE, whose name is Mystery, and whose inseparable attendants are Darkness and Fraud and Slavery and Death.

LECTURE VIII.

ON THE ADVANTAGES RESULTING TO THE STATE
FROM THE CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT OF THE
TRUE RELIGION.

AMONG the most common and most vexatious arts of controversy, is that by which a disputant selects what is in reality but a part of an opponent's argument, and undertakes to refute it as if it were the whole. To assaults of this nature it is easy to see that the great argument which we maintain is peculiarly exposed, from the mode in which it has been judged proper to conduct it, namely, by different advocates taking up consecutively the different branches of the proof. The unfairness of such attacks is obvious, but we ought to expect them, and to guard against them; and I am anxious, therefore, both on this account, and

because much of the subsequent reasoning proceeds upon the fact, that the civil establishment of the true religion is a thing lawful and right on the part of the State, to revert very briefly to some of the considerations by which we hold that fact to have been already proved.

The general statement, you know, by which our brethren on the opposite side endeavour to cut short all argument upon the question is this,—that the State, in doing any thing whatever about religion, is transgressing the limits of its own province,—that the religious welfare of a people is not one of those interests which it is the office of a national legislature to guard and promote. This is what they assert, but what I never saw any attempt to demonstrate when it was denied. They lay it down as an ultimate principle, self-evident and axiomatical. That it is not entitled, however, to the character of an axiom, or self-evident truth, is plain from the fact, that to other minds this character belongs to exactly the opposite statement. To us, endeavouring to judge from the nature of the case, it seems obvious, that the object of a national legislature is to promote, in all possible ways, the national welfare; that it has charge of every branch of public interest; that whatever kind of good has the epithets of social, public, national, properly attached to it, falls within the scope of its concern. This is our axiom on the subject, and it has, at least, this characteristic feature of a truth entitled to be so denominated, that it is supported by the common consent—embodied in the

common practice of mankind. In all legislatures that ever sat, the assertion that any proposal tends to promote the public interest—the advantage of the nation—is felt and recognized, as giving it a claim to be considered, and, if the allegation is proved, to be adopted. National independence, national freedom, national justice, national peace, national honour, national morals, national character, have always, for the simple reason that they are national, been esteemed, and treated as the fitting objects of concern to a national legislature and a national government. The extent, then, of the word “national,” legitimately applied, is that which has universally been felt as measuring the sphere of legislation and of government—a sphere which, thus defined, obviously includes in it the subject of National Religion. We find, accordingly, that not only in the abstract, but in its application to this particular point, the maxim, that every public interest is part of the legitimate domain of the legislator and the statesman, has been confirmed by the universal voice of man; all lawgivers and all nations, civilized and barbarous, ancient and modern, Jewish and Gentile, Christian and heathen, with scarcely an exception, having acknowledged and acted on the principle, that the interests of *National Religion* are most appropriate and most important objects of political concern.

The obligation thus imposed on rulers by the relation which they hold to man, is strongly enforced, in the next place, by that which they occupy to God.

There is no point of duty which we are wont to hear with greater frequency, or with more obvious reason urged on men, than the duty of employing for the Divine glory whatever gifts have been conferred on them by the Divine beneficence. This is the lesson of the parable of the talents; but neither in the nature of the principle itself, nor in the scriptural representation of it contained in that important parable, do I find any exception made or suggested in regard to the gift of civil authority and power, as if that talent were not, like every other, to be devoted to a religious use—were not to be employed distinctly and avowedly “for the glory of God,”—that glory, the advancement of which is especially bound up with the progress of his religion in the world.

The same view is most abundantly supported by the analogies of all relations resembling that which subsists between a government and its subjects. In every case but this, it is, I believe, admitted, that those who occupy the superior relations of life, are bound to provide the means of religious improvement for those with whom they are connected in the corresponding relations as inferiors. Take the head of a family, for example, uniting in his person the character of a parent and a master. Is it not acknowledged, that he is not only at liberty, but under obligation to employ a competent portion of his time and care and property for promoting the religious interests, by providing for the religious instruction, of his children and his servants,—those to whom he is related as a superior, whether by

natural ties or by voluntary compact? Need I point out to you how perfect an analogy subsists between the case of heads of families and that of rulers of nations, and how extremely unnatural it is to suppose, that the one case should not come under the same general principles of social duty as the other? The blessing pronounced upon Abraham, because, said Jehovah, "I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, to keep the way of the Lord," has always, in my opinion, afforded a sanction as express to national as to family religion; especially when we consider, that to his numerous household—a household out of which he collected armies and made war upon the robber kings around—he occupied as nearly as possible the relation of a civil sovereign. "Hear us, my lord," said the sons of Heth to him, "for thou art a mighty prince among us."

We are not at all discouraged by any thing that has been alleged in order to explain away the circumstance, from referring, in support of the same views, to the marked approbation bestowed in scripture on the Jewish kings who vigorously employed their civil authority in support of Jehovah's worship. Take the case, for example, of Jehoshaphat, recorded 2 Chron. xvii. 7, 8, 9. "Also in the third year of his reign, Jehoshaphat sent to his princes, even to Benhail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiab, to teach in the cities of Judah. And with them he sent Levites, even Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adoni-

jab, and Tobijah, and Tobadonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, priests. And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah and taught." And all this, as you gather from the nature of the context in which it occurs, is related with the most intense and decisive approbation on the part of the Holy Ghost. We are told, indeed, that this took place under a Theocratic government; in other words, that Jehoshaphat, as king of Judah, was vicegerent of Jehovah in another sense than ordinary monarchs. But how far did his vicegerency extend? did it comprehend any other power than that which was merely civil and political? did it invest him with any spiritual function—any office in the Church which entitled him to interfere with its concerns as an ecclesiastical man, and not a merely civil magistrate? Let the history of Uzziah, his successor, testify, and prevent it from being again alleged, that the kings of the house of David were priests as well as kings. 'This august and sacred union of offices was the exclusive prerogative among all that royal seed of Him, concerning whom Zechariah prophesied as seated "a priest upon his throne,"—to whom Jehovah swore the inviolable oath, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek." But then it is asserted, that the Jewish Kings were typical persons, and their acts of royal administration typical acts. It is easy to make this general statement about the Jewish Monarchs and their royalty, in the abstract. But it

would be very difficult to prove it true of the particular case from the life of Jehoshaphat we have just quoted. There is no hint of a mystical meaning belonging to it in the passage itself—none in any other part of scripture. But let it be typical, what then? I hope no one will say that what is wrong in itself is made right by being called a type, or being used as such. God has alluded to the act of Jehoshaphat with an emphasis of approbation that cannot be mistaken; and, type or no type, I am verily persuaded that what God has applauded, is and must be right;—right at the time in its details, and right for ever in its principle. “He that reproveth God let him answer it.” Justly dissatisfied with both the methods to which I have referred, of evading the stringent and formidable argument in favour of Religious Establishments derived from the Jewish history, some of our opponents have had recourse to the assertion, that the Jewish Establishment itself was founded on the Voluntary principle; that as far as the collection of the tithes, and the subsistence of the priests was concerned, there is no instance on record of the civil power being employed to enforce the requisitions of the Mosaic Law. Now, to this it has been most satisfactorily answered, that standing, as it does, in the midst of the judicial code of the Hebrew State,—the rest of which, it is admitted, was maintained, when necessary, by the compulsory application of the force of government,—the presumption, which can be set aside only by a direct and conclusive proof of the contrary, is clearly in fa-

vour of the supposition, that the law of tithes was supported during the good times of the Sacred Commonwealth, in the same way as the other laws with which it was associated. Difficult, as it is, in all cases, (impossible we boldly declare it in the present case,) to prove a negative, this is the only kind of proof which can avail the other party in the instance now before us. But this is not all ; for it so happens, that we have distinct cases to quote, in which the civil authority was, in point of fact, employed, in order to procure for the priests and Levites their legal dues. For we are told, that among the other measures adopted by the godly Hezekiah for the reformation of religion among his people, “ he *commanded* the people that dwelt in Jerusalem, to give the portion of the priests and Levites, that they might be encouraged in the law of the Lord ; *and as soon as the commandment came abroad*, the children of Israel brought in abundance, the first fruits of corn, wine, oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field ; and the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly.” A similar case is described, as having occurred under the government of Nehemiah. Neh. xiii. 10—13.—But what sets the conclusion drawn from the history of Israel beyond all reasonable controversy, is the most important fact, that the very conduct approved in Jewish princes, is approved in Gentile monarchs, who held their thrones under no peculiar dispensation, but simply as all rulers hold them, “ by the grace of God,” as the Sovereign Lord and King of all the world. The books of Daniel,

Ezra, Nehemiah, abound with cases in point. I shall present here a single passage as a specimen,—the narration given by Ezra of the first triumphant passover which Israel celebrated after the rebuilding of the Holy House on Zion,—Ezra vi. 21, 22. “ And the children of Israel which were come again out of the captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, did eat, and kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy; for the Lord had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the House of God, the God of Israel.”

The same spirit which breathes in these the records of history pervades the oracles of prophecy. That precious chapter of the sacred volume you will find everywhere studded with such passages as these, indicating, that in the latter,—the gospel-day—royal majesty, and civil authority, and national resources should all, with the Almighty’s approbation, be employed in the support of his Church, and the propagation of his kingdom. “ Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings,”—Jehovah himself exhorts the sovereigns of the world, addressing them, as the whole tenor of the second Psalm distinctly shews, in their official capacity,—“ be instructed ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss ye the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.” Such is the exhortation. Now, hear how, in

the days of the Church's purity and triumph, that exhortation is to be obeyed, "The kings of Tarshish and the isles shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts; yea, all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him." "And kings shall be thy nursing-fathers, and their queens thy nursing-mothers. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee. For the nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee, shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." "Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings; and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour, and thy Redeemer the Mighty One of Jacob." In regard to these and similar passages, in which civil magistrates and collective nations are so frequently introduced as contributing to the support, the growth, and the honour of the Church, few unprejudiced persons, we apprehend, would refuse to agree with the candid and very temperately expressed remark of one who certainly had no previous bias in favour of Establishments, the eminent Independent Divine, Dr Williams, where he says; "A National Establishment of Religion, when well ordered, appears most agreeable to the prophetic passages in question, as well as to the general tenor of revelation."

To the results of this whole reasoning, there are two objections which our brethren who support the opposite opinion, are accustomed to oppose, as of primary weight and importance; charging the view we advocate

as involving: *1st*, An injustice; and *2dly*, A moral absurdity. The injustice of the case they assert by alleging, that it is an act of direct oppression, and an interference with the liberty of conscience, that those who do not choose to avail themselves of the religious instruction provided by the State for its subjects, should yet be taxed for the maintenance of a Church of which they disapprove. Now, on this point, we readily confess, that it is a great deal better when the matter can be so arranged, as that the National Establishment should be supported, as among ourselves, not by a tax, but by an endowment, and *that* an endowment coeval with the most sacred and undoubted rights of private property; but still we maintain that it is not sufficient to constitute the exaction of a tax from any individual unjust, that he disapproves of the object to which the produce of that tax is to be applied. The responsibility on that head lies with the legislature, not with the subject. It is plain that, unless this were distinctly understood, the government of nations could not proceed for a day; and it is obvious that our blessed Lord thus viewed the matter, when he himself paid tribute to Cæsar, and encouraged others to do the same, even when their contributions went to the support of a tyrannic throne, and of a false religion. He felt that the responsibility on this point lay not with those who paid, but with those who received the tribute. The second objection of our opposing brethren to which I referred, and on which they rely, in fact, as the very palladium of their cause, is this, that if

it be the duty of Christian rulers to establish their religion, it must equally be that of Pagan and Mohammedan rulers to establish their respective superstitions. The weakness of this boasted argument, however, will readily appear, when we consider that it is only a particular instance of a general class of cases, the problem respecting which every one knows how to solve—cases, I mean, of erroneous conscience. No man doubts that it is a man's general duty to act according to his conscience, nor does he need to modify this statement, because a man's conscience may be guided by false and mistaken principles. Whatever may be the injurious consequences which in this case may result, they obviously arise from the man's having a mistaken conscience in the outset, and not from his following the general rule of moral duty, that he should act according to his conscience. What should you think of the reasoner who maintained that it was not lawful for a Christian parent to instruct his children in the truths and precepts of the gospel, because in that case he would sanction the conduct of the Hindoo or the Mohammedan, in training up his children to the faith and obedience of the Shaster and the Koran? The objection is neither stronger nor weaker against domestic than against national religion.

Such, then, are some of the leading points in the line of argument which has already been set before you with admirable fulness, acuteness, and precision, by my predecessors on this branch of the question—that which respects the part to be adopted in regard

to Christianity by the State. I am now to shew that the course thus dictated by the gravest considerations of duty, is recommended by the highest considerations of expediency, that what is right in this matter is also politic, that the requirements of public principle are supported by those of public prudence.

I. And here I have to remark in the first place, that what is right must be politic. The Creator of the world and Sovereign of Providence so fashioned all things at first, and so orders all things now, in their mutual relations and dependencies, that his administration of the universe shall bear the character of a *moral* administration; that all reasonable beings, whether individuals or societies, shall have reason to be convinced that "in keeping his commandments there is a great reward." For an individual, a family, a community, in any circumstances, to act according to the dictates of duty, is, in so far, to fall in with the native and original tendencies of the all-embracing government, as well as to become the objects of direct complacency to Him who sits at its head, ordering all things "according to the counsel of his own will," and for ever mindful of his holy promise: "Them that honour me I will honour, but they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." If the argument be good by which we have already endeavoured to shew that the State is under a moral obligation to support Christianity by conferring on it a Civil Establishment, then the expediency of such a step is as manifest as the truth

of the propositions, that it never can be expedient to offend God, that it must always be expedient to please him. To illustrate these propositions in their connection with the policy of nations, was no doubt one of the great objects for which Jehovah was pleased to establish, and to record the history of that economy of national and visible retribution which he administered in reference to his ancient people. His intention was, that it might be once for all demonstrated by a conspicuous example of fact, that these were principles distinctly recognised by him in his government of nations ; that those ages and tribes of men, in reference to whom his mysterious wisdom should adopt a method of procedure less apparently founded on the principle of retribution, might still have reason to know that these were maxims as fixed and certain as the immutability of his nature, and the foundations of his everlasting throne. The fact will not be denied, however the inference deducible from the fact may be evaded, that the special instance of national obedience or national rebellion, in reference to which the Almighty was pleased to give demonstration of the general principles stated above, was just the instance of the people's fidelity or unfaithfulness to the duty of affording his religion a national establishment and support. In the history of Israel, the times when the service and profession of the true religion were publicly countenanced, supported, and maintained, by civil authority and power—the times of Moses and Joshua, David and

Solomon, Asa and Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah and Josiah, Zerubbabel and Nehemiah, are those which gleam upon us through the mist of ages, bright with national splendour and prosperity, and the reflected light of Jehovah's countenance; while those in which it was abandoned to the unaided energies of the Voluntary principle, — cast upon the private resources of its adherents and friends,—are blotted with public degradation and disaster, dark with the shadow of the Almighty's frown. So that, having proved already that, in reference to the Civil Establishment of the true religion, what was lawful and right then, is lawful and right now, we are entitled to view the Jewish history as imparting peculiar force and emphasis to the general principle when applied to this specific case,—that, in the government of nations, what is right is prudent,—that to honour, to serve, to please God, is not only the highest duty, but the truest policy of states.

2. But, in the second place, taking it as proved that the thing is right, I affirm that it is advantageous, inasmuch as it affords the means of consecrating to God, and drawing down his blessing at almost every step in the actual working of the machinery of government. It makes it possible for the State to sanctify its procedure, in all the various departments of administration, by the word of God and by prayer. In the fact of a public functionary or a public body, as such, offering up prayer to God, the principle of an Establishment is inextricably involved; and accordingly you may remember that, some time ago, when the proposal was made in the municipal

council of your own city, to call for the services of the Dissenting ministers in opening the meetings of that honourable body, according to the due order, by the act of solemn supplication, the proposal was resisted, (and *that*, as I can affirm of personal knowledge, with the approbation of the most distinguished individuals holding Voluntary opinions out of doors,) on the ground that it would be contrary to the principles of a Voluntary-churchman to officiate in such a service. That those who took up this position argued consistently from their avowed opinions, I think you will all admit. For the State, or a public body, acting as such, to employ, in order to the furtherance of its specific ends, the one religious ordinance of prayer, is just as much a violation of the principle, that religion either prosecuted as an end or employed as a means lies entirely without the province of the State, as to employ for the same purpose the whole system of religious ordinances, the employment of which constitutes a Church Establishment; and had there been (I take for granted there was not) a Voluntary Churchman willing to have acceded to the proposal then made, he only proved how trivial a bribe, in the shape of distinction and precedence, would have prevailed with him to compromise his professed opinions, to act the part of an Established Minister, and give in his adhesion to the principle of an Established Church. It is the fact, I believe, that in the United States of America the Supreme Legislature has a chaplain among its other officers; the deliberations

of Congress are preceded by solemn prayer to God. But this is no proof that such an arrangement is consistent with the Voluntary principle; it is only one among many proofs, that even America has not ventured to adopt in all its breadth, and with all its consequences, the doctrine of which she is held forth as the National Representative and Champion,—that even she found the fundamental principles on which a Religious Establishment is built, so thoroughly incorporated with the frame of society, so deeply interwoven with the texture of the human mind, that she could not, that she durst not utterly extirpate the preserving and purifying element, the salt of the world, from her laws and institutions. It being plain, then, and I believe admitted, that the principle of an Establishment is that which alone allows of prayer presented by rulers and legislators in the exercise of these characters, or as a part of their public actings and proceedings, what Christian mind, admitting the practice to be lawful, will not admit it to be infinitely expedient, and the principle which sanctions it to be expedient to the same extent? The Christian knows that the blessing of the Most High, is that which alone can give success to any measure or any course of public or of private policy, and that the most effectual means of obtaining this blessing is the believing prayer of those who feel their need of it. He knows that prayer moves the hand which moves the universe; and justly therefore will esteem the system which enables the State to put in operation

this mighty means of procuring on her measures the blessing from on high,—of consecrating by the voice of holy prayer the inauguration of our kings, the deliberations of our legislature, the sitting-down of our tribunals, the counsels and the acts of our municipal administrations, as a system which proved by previous considerations lawful, is, on this consideration, incalculably useful.

3. But I have to observe once more, that if an Ecclesiastical Establishment be lawful and right, it is expedient and politic on account of its direct tendency to promote the most important national interests, through the diffusion of religious knowledge and religious principle. The force of this argument, of course, depends upon the correctness of the statement, that an Ecclesiastical Establishment granted by the State to the true religion, is fitted to impart to the energies of that religion a more effective and diffusive operation on the character of a people, than it would otherwise have exerted. Against this statement, therefore, as the key of the whole position we are now assuming, the adversaries of Establishments have directed an extraordinary force, I will not say of argument, but of assertion. They tell us that Establishments have been “the nurses of infidelity,” not as we supposed, the handmaids of religion; that they are not merely inefficient, but pernicious; that “they ruin more souls than they save;” that “their tendency is to secularise religion, promote hypocrisy, perpetuate error, produce infidelity, destroy the

unity and purity of the Church, and disturb the peace and order of civil society ; that they are among the principal causes of the low state of Christianity in those countries where it is professed, and of the slowness of its progress throughout the world." Not much alarmed, however, by this sounding vehemence of vague asseveration, we ask, "*How* they come to have this effect ?" And observe how they all answer. By shewing not how the principle of an Establishment, but how the corruptions of Establishments, tend to this result. Mr Hall, to whom almost all the Voluntary churchmen refer as to their "*Magnus Apollo*," one whose words are oracles, argues this point throughout, on the assumption that the Established Creed is false,* Mr Marshall, the Herostratus of the controversy, whose ambition was to make himself a name by setting fire to the National Sanctuary, supports the allegation by appealing to the patronage of the Church of Scotland and the hierarchy of the Church of England.† Dr Heugh, whose pamphlet I have no hesitation in describing as, of all that I have seen on the opposite side, the one most worthy of respect, refers, in proof of the allegation, to a Church which, in return for the favour of the State, throws down the barriers of discipline, and meekly stoops her neck to the yoke of patronage, "in which the teachers of religion solemnly subscribe what they neither believe nor teach, in which livings are bought and sold like any other marketable commodity,

* Works, vol. iii. p. 28.

† Sermon on Establishments, p. 28.

in which the clergy by thousands bind themselves to duties which they never perform,—exacting the hire, but refusing the labour.”* Dr Wardlaw informs us, that the grand practical mischief of religious Establishments, has always appeared to his mind to be the spread and prevalence through their instrumentality of mere nominal religion, inasmuch as “in national Christianity is necessarily involved the admission to Christian privileges of multitudes, whose Christianity consists in nothing but a name, and their accidental residence in a Christian land.”† Whilst in that remarkable specimen of concentrated bitterness which most of the Voluntary Church Associations have adopted as the exhibition of their fundamental principles, and from which we have quoted above some of the hardest words on the tendency of Church Establishments to promote impiety and irreligion, the statement is, that this is their tendency, “as exhibited in

* Considerations, pp. 63, 68.

† Sermon, p. 44.—The last quotation may seem to present us with that of which we are in quest,—the statement of something implied in the *principle* of an Establishment that is deleterious to true religion in a land,—inasmuch as the author declares that the evils which he deplures are *necessarily* involved in National Christianity. Every one, however, perceives, that his insertion of the word “necessarily,” is totally unauthorized, and that the only portion of plausibility which his representations contain, is derived from facts which have occurred under Establishments corruptly constituted, or under rightly constituted Establishments corruptly administered.

their effects ;" by which is plainly meant, in the history of Churches, which the objectors charge as containing many corruptions in their constitution and their administration, superadded to the fact of their enjoying a legal Establishment. These are the grounds on which the most distinguished of our opponents assert the tendency of an Establishment to promote the cause of infidelity and irreligion. Now, leaving the truth of such allegations, and their application to the particular Church of which we count it our honour to be the children and the servants, to be dealt with by those who are to succeed me, and who are to discuss specifically the application of the general argument to the case of the Church of Scotland, I now protest against them, as utterly irrelevant to the general argument itself. The sophism which confounds the general principle of an Establishment with the particular circumstances of existing Establishments, is one against which you cannot be too often or too earnestly put upon your guard, in connection not merely with the point immediately before us, but with almost every part of this great argument. You must always remember that the matter at present in dispute is the abstract general principle of employing the legislative and civil power of the State in providing for the Church. To insist on arguing this general point on the hypothesis that in the Establishment supposed there are other faults, abuses, and corruptions, besides the one (so called) of being provided for by the State, is voluntarily to darken and disturb the discussion,—is for those who do so,

virtually to confess that their argument requires to be tricked out and concealed by extraneous appendages, ere it can endure to be inspected. Before, therefore, you can judge of the weight and value of the adverse reasonings, you must each of you suppose the Church, the endowment of which is in question, to be the Church in what each of you may esteem its purest possible form. Suppose such a Church—with the most scriptural confession, government, discipline, worship, and administration you can imagine,—existing in a land, and then suppose that the Civil Magistrate, (a compendious personification of the Constitutional Legislative Power,)—thinking it his duty to Christ, as the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, to encourage to the uttermost the progress of His spiritual kingdom,—and thinking it not less his duty to the people for whom he is appointed “a minister of good,” to promote among them the influence of what he knows will contribute, to an incalculable degree, at once to their temporal and to their spiritual benefit,—shall make offer to this pure and scriptural Church, to erect, at his own expense, places of worship throughout the land, and support a sufficient number of her ministers to officiate in them, without requiring her to surrender any part of her spiritual jurisdiction and prerogatives ; suppose all this, and then consider and debate the question, whether there be any well-grounded objection to such an alliance between the civil and the ecclesiastical bodies. If, in these circumstances, you could be content to see such an union carried into

effect, we have a right to your verdict on the question now at issue. You may, on other grounds, dissent from, and condemn our Establishment, and all Establishments that now exist or ever have existed, but not for the reason which is now alleged as so conclusive—not for the reason that they *are* Establishments. I have diverged into these general remarks respecting the general fallacy on the part of our opponents, which happens to have come across us in this particular part of the discussion, because I know no one point the right understanding of which will guide a plain understanding more satisfactorily through the mazes of the whole argument. The distinction between an Establishment in the abstract and existing Establishments in the concrete, is one which carries in its bosom an answer to far more than half of the customary objections brought against us in this discussion, and, by its right application, would condense many a far-stretching harangue into very tolerable brevity, and cut down into a most innocuous tract many a ponderous and seemingly formidable volume. But, to return to the particular point before us, let me now demand of you, on the strength of the distinction I have been stating, that in judging of the alleged tendency of Establishments to promote infidelity, you will dismiss from your minds whatever statements you feel would not be true, on the supposition of the Church established in a land being the Church in what each of you may esteem its very last perfection of ecclesiastical form and constitution. Imagine such a Church receiving the present from the

State of a number of churches, and of ministerial stipends suited to the necessities of the country, and, looking at the proposal in the light of antecedent probability and reasonable expectation, do you see any thing in this one fact calculated at once to extinguish all the energies of Christianization in the Church, and convert them into influences on the side of infidelity? I must just leave it to the common sense of every one who hears me, to decide whether a Church, by supposition entirely pure and scriptural, would not, by the acceptance of such a gift, become mistress of a mighty apparatus of additional means for the Christianization of a people, in having thus, by the public liberality, a universal home mission under her superintendence, put in full and busy operation over the whole extent of a country, by which the leaven of Christian instruction might be introduced and set to work at a thousand points before untouched in the mass of population,—by which uncounted multitudes, who would never have gone in quest of salvation for themselves, might have the “kingdom of heaven brought nigh unto them,” and the promise of the Lord fulfilled in their experience: “I am found of them that sought me not, I am made manifest to them that asked not after me.” But it is alleged, perhaps, that however plausible and reasonable these expectations might appear, the acceptance by the Church of such a present from the State, being in itself unscriptural and unlawful, will prove so displeasing to Almighty God, as to provoke him to withhold that blessing from on

high, on which the beneficial efficacy of all means depends. This objection, however, obviously assumes the unlawfulness of the means in question,—an assumption of which the falsehood, in the case before us, has been already demonstrated. Let us, besides, just ask the question,—whether, in those instances where the state of matters has approached most nearly to the supposition on which we are now arguing, that of a perfectly pure and scriptural Church put by the State on the footing of an Establishment,—the facts bear out the adverse allegations? Can it be alleged, in point of fact, that when the gospel is purely preached in an Established Church, it loses its power for conversion and for edification—that its saving energies are withered by the curse of the Almighty—that the sanctuary becomes a nursery of irreligion—a seminary of infidelity? Will any Voluntary pleader allow me to select, say a hundred parishes of our land, blessed with the services of as many faithful, diligent, active gospel ministers within the pale of the Establishment, and take upon him before-hand to allege of them, that the ultimate result of their exertions will be found to be the progress and the triumph of scepticism and hypocrisy, of error and impiety? I am sure, from the admissions which occur in all their writings of the good which has been done by the labours of evangelical parish ministers, that none of our opponents will accept the challenge. How comes it then, that when we suppose, as we have a logical right to do, a whole Established Church consisting of

such men, they are prepared to predicate of the thousand, or the ten thousand, as the case may be, what they shrink from asserting of the hundreds—to profess their conviction, that while the labours of the few shall mightily promote the progress of Christianity, those of the many shall arrest and turn it back, and shall, upon the other hand, support and propagate whatever is most alien to its nature? If it be the office of multiplication “not to change the quality, but to increase the quantity,”—if such a process has confessedly no virtue to metamorphose “apples into apricots,” much less can it have the power of transmuting the wholesome fruit into the deadly poison,—of changing the produce of the vine of Sorek into “the grapes of Sodom, and the clusters of Gomorrah.” But then it is said, that, admitting all that we can ask in regard to the good effected by the labours of pious and faithful ministers in the purest conceivable Establishment, the fact is, at least the opinion of our Dissenting brethren is, that, did no Establishment exist, an ampler supply of the means of grace would be provided for a people—more churches would be erected, and the services of more ministers would be secured by the Voluntary principle alone, than are now maintained in operation by the Voluntary principle and the Established principle together. I greatly fear that this idea, at least in the present state of the Church and the world, can be accounted no better than “a devout imagination.” I see nothing to support it even in the history of the primitive ages. The object of the Apostolic Missionaries

was considerably different from that which the supporters of Religious Establishments in modern times contemplate. Their object was to propagate the gospel on a large scale among mankind,—to fix it in central and conspicuous stations in the various countries of the earth, from which the sacred illumination might afterwards, by the use of appropriate means, diffuse itself through the masses of human population—to occupy successfully the key-positions, the garrison-towns, of the regions to be subdued, leaving it to their successors, by every system of means adapted to the nature of the enterprise, to prosecute and to effect the thorough subjugation of the provinces thus penetrated and overrun by their Christian prowess to the sceptre of the Lord's Anointed. That this, the specific object which an Established Church is intended to effect, was not contemplated by the Apostles as the direct result of their personal exertions, is plain from the whole style and character of their procedure. That, whether contemplated or not by the early Church, it was not effected, while she depended simply on the resources of the Voluntary principle, is obvious, as from many notices of Ecclesiastical History, so, in particular, from the very instructive fact, that at the close of that period, when Christianity had become conspicuous and predominant in the cities and great towns of the empire, those who still adhered to the ancient superstitions, began to be known by the name of *Pagans*,—that is, “the villagers and rustics,”—“the country people.” And if the early history of

the Church says thus little for the power of the Voluntary principle, in providing a supply of the means of grace sufficient to pervade and interpenetrate with Christianity the mass of a country's population, as little do we find it recommended for this purpose by facts of more recent date. The insufficiency of that principle, unaided and alone, to provide an adequate supply of religious instruction for a nation, has, in a preceding lecture, been ably proved to you, by the instances of America abroad, and of the Highlands and large towns at home. I observe, indeed, that our Dissenting brethren are accustomed to point to these very cases of the Highlands and large towns of Scotland, as a demonstration on their side, of the impotency of an Establishment towards the effect desired. We frankly admit the inference in regard to such an Establishment as now exists—an Establishment admitting of parishes that comprehend 1000, 1400, 1600, 1800 square miles of extent, or 20,000, 40,000, 60,000, 80,000 souls of population. To shew you the full efficiency of our method of promoting the Christianity of a people, we must have not merely an Establishment, but an adequate Establishment. Let them join with us in procuring from the Legislature, for every 2000 or 3000 people—for every 40 or 50 square miles, a church and a school, or, where necessary, two or three, each furnished respectively with a working Minister and a qualified Master, and at the close of a generation we shall be content to be judged by the result, and shall be able, I doubt not, to point, in

proof of the truth of our anticipations, to the spectacle of an incalculably advanced, and still rapidly advancing Christianity,—to the reviving glories of “the Second Reformation.” The period so denominated, comprehending the second Establishment of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, from 1638 to 1660, with that which succeeded its third Establishment in 1690, are historical exhibitions of what a tolerably adequate and well-ordered Establishment can effect on the religious character of a nation. I do not cite the descriptions given by Kirkton and De Foe, of the religious reformations of these periods, merely because they have been quoted so often, that I suppose the greater part of my audience have them nearly by heart; but they are instances of fact which afford the most decisive support to the inference we have already drawn from the nature and circumstances of the case, that the Establishment and Endowment of pure Christianity by the State is well-fitted, in the order of means, to promote the religious instruction, and to raise the religious character of a people.*

* In confirmation of the sentiments expressed above, I may be permitted to quote the following sentences from one, the fact of differing from whom must always be to me a reason for seriously reconsidering my own opinion. In a sermon preached at the opening of the Associate Synod in 1819, Dr Brown, now of Edinburgh, after presenting an impressive and but too true description of the destitution of means of grace which exists in our country, proceeds, in the following terms, to speak of Dr Chalmers’ scheme for remedying this crying evil:—“The

The question, then, is reduced to this—whether the diffusion of religious knowledge, and religious prin-

miserable circumstances of a large body of the inhabitants of our great cities, in reference to the means of religious instruction, have attracted the notice, and excited the Christian sympathy of a distinguished individual, whose original genius, extensive literary and scientific acquirements, and overwhelming eloquence, devoted, as they honestly, zealously, and steadily are, to the best interests of mankind, make him an honour and a blessing to his country and age ; and he has, with perfect consistency, as a zealous though liberal churchman, proposed the multiplication of places of worship in connection with the Establishment, as the best method of securing a supply of the spiritual necessities of his countrymen. Could any measure be devised for securing that the new churches shall be filled with ministers honestly devoted to the ends of their vocation, *their erection would undoubtedly be an important national blessing* : but should the number of faithful pastors, appointed to these new churches, be only in the same proportion as in the churches already in existence, (and if the mode of appointment remains unaltered, on what principle can we look for an increased proportion?) it may be fairly questioned, whether the adoption of the plan, even to the full extent of the benevolent proposer's wishes, would be, upon the whole, an advantage in a religious and moral point of view, or contribute, in any important degree, to the diminution of the great and growing evil of a population, unsubjected to the wholesome influence of a pure and abundant dispensation of Christian truth." Here it is distinctly stated, in consistency with the views expressed above, that the increase of the Establishment, and by parity of reason, the existence of an Establishment, if reasonable security were had that its churches should be filled with faithful ministers, (a supposition certainly not impos-

ciple, is fitted to contribute to the public welfare and happiness. In proving the utility of the true religion to a State, we are proving the utility of the Establishment of that religion. Now, on the former and preliminary point no doubt has ever been expressed by any one pretending to the name of Christian. So obvious, indeed, is the connection between the power of Christianity and the good order and public welfare of society, that the infidel has been wont, on this very ground, to insinuate, that religion altogether is nothing more than a politic device of lawgivers and statesmen, for keeping the world in order. We find, to be sure, the sceptic Bayle, distinguished as he was, even among infidels, for the love of paradox and peculiarity, ven-

sible to be realized, and, therefore, not detracting from the force of the admission which it qualifies, so far as the general question about Establishments is concerned,) would be "an important national blessing," in consequence of "the wholesome influence" on the minds of a people, "of a pure and abundant dispensation of Christian truth." It is now sixteen years since the faithful and striking appeal contained in the above-mentioned discourse was addressed to the Associate Synod. What have they done since then to illustrate the sufficiency of the Voluntary principle, for meeting and counteracting the enormous evils there detailed? I do not invidiously ask the question of the Associate Synod alone; but of the whole Christian population of the country. It is twenty years since Dr Chalmers in Scotland, and Mr Yates in England, brought the facts of the case before the public,—and what has the Voluntary liberality of Christians generally effected, in comparison with the necessity of the case?

turing the assertion, that a State made up of real Christians, acting according to the rules of Christianity, could not hold together. "But wherefore not?" the celebrated Montesquieu, the acutest of speculative politicians, answers, "wherefore not? It would be a State composed of citizens infinitely enlightened on the subject of their duties, and animated with the greatest zeal to fulfil them; the more they believed themselves to owe to religion, the more they would feel that they owed to their country. The principles of Christianity engraven on the heart, would be of infinitely greater force than the false honour of monarchies, the human virtues of republics, and the servile fear of despotic states."* Were it necessary to confirm the statement of one who had contemplated with a glance at once so comprehensive and so piercing the political history of man by the authority of great names, I might spend the evening in accumulating the testimonies of the wisest and most illustrious of mankind, describing religion as "the foundation of national welfare," "the bulwark of government," "the bond of civil union," "the firmest support of legislation,"—to use the words of the greatest of our modern opponents, "the pillar of society, the safe-guard of nations, the parent of social order; which alone has power to curb the fury of the passions, and secure to every one his rights; to the laborious the reward of their industry, to the rich the enjoyment of their

* De l'Esprit des Loix, xxiv. 6.

wealth, to nobles the preservation of their honours, and to princes the stability of their thrones.”*

I ask you not, however, to yield to the authority of names, but to exercise your own reason on the case ; and knowing what the Christian religion is, to judge for yourselves whether its extension and enforcement is fitted to promote or not the true welfare of human society. Consider, in the first place, the effect which it is calculated to produce upon the national intellect and mind. There is nothing that exalts and opens and refines the popular mind like Christianity. Addressing itself to all the faculties and susceptibilities of the human soul, it, when embraced, supplies them all with the noblest and most appropriate objects, and excites them all to the most wholesome and dignified exertion,—the effect of which is to improve and develop the mental powers themselves, to make them familiar with great ideas, and capable of exalted efforts, to form the mind to the general habit of reflection, and impress the character with the general stamp of thoughtfulness. It never was doubted, that to this source, in a great degree, we are to trace the vigorous and pervading intelligence,—the powerful manifestation of mind,—by which the national character of Scotland was wont to be so honourably distinguished ; and if it be the case,—what no one who looks around him with any capacity of observation, can have failed to perceive,—no one who loves his country wisely can

* Hall on Infidelity—Works, vol. i., p. 68.

perceive without lamenting—that a swift decline is taking place in this ancient characteristic of the Scottish people; and a population is rapidly growing up around us, consisting of merely sentient rather than of rational beings,—in whom that subtile and etherial element, the pervasion of which through the human being, alone makes it any thing more than brutal nature, animated dust, seems quenched and lost, so dimly does it burn amidst the overspreading vapour and grossness of the merely animal existence,—there can be no means imagined of checking the swift degeneracy,—of upholding and reviving the sinking intelligence of the people—of redeeming old Scotland's place among the nations as the mother of a people aggrandized and embellished through all gradations of society by the fine nobility of reason,—calculated to be so efficacious as the extension of religious knowledge and religious culture, on a scale proportioned to the population and the necessities of the country. In what degree, then, the vigour and illumination of the popular understanding is a national good, in what degree the darkness and degradation of the popular mind is a national evil, in that degree is Christianity, judged merely by its effects upon a nation's intellect, to be regarded as the firmest basis of public safety,—the most copious fountain of public good. A generally Christian will be of necessity a generally intelligent community.

Consider, further, the effect which the prevalence of pure and undefiled religion is fitted to produce upon

the morals of a nation. The connection between the prevalence of pure religion and sound morality is what requires no proof and scarcely any illustration. It belongs to Christianity at once to prescribe a more perfect rule of duty, and to enforce that rule by more solemn sanctions and more prevailing motives, than are to be derived from any other quarter whatsoever. "The grace of God which bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in the world, looking for that blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." * Such is an inspired summary of the morality which is inculcated in the gospel, and of the chief among those mighty and persuasive considerations by which its cultivation is enforced ; and who is there that will not regard the effectual inculcation of such exalted morality by such exalted motives on the mind of the community,—the impersonation of this divine description in a national character—as a result, intrinsically and of itself, more desirable by far than the largest conceivable accession of national wealth or national renown ? Confining our attention to a single class of virtues, such as are of a more directly relative and social character, how excellent and desirable a

* Tit. ii. 11—14.

state of society were that in which the practical lessons of the gospel had been thoroughly learned, and were generally obeyed ! Righteousness and mercy would then be the stability of thrones. The rulers and judges among men, feeling that they were subject,—that they were responsible to Him who is the Head of all principality and power,—the Prince of the kings of the earth,—would shew themselves anxious that in their subordinate departments of administration as his delegates and servants, their sway might resemble, in its character and its effects, that which He exercises in his boundless sphere of majesty and rule,—the “Just One who ruleth among men, ruling in the fear of God,” and whose benignant government is as the “light of the morning when the sun riseth,—a morning without clouds.” The subjects, on the other hand, would honour government as the ordinance of God, and governors as the ministers of God for good, being subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake ; remembering that He who said, “Fear God,” said also, “Honour the King ;” “Fear the Lord and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change.” Authority, swelling no longer into proud capricious tyranny—freedom degenerating no more into wayward and ungoverned license—a sanctified authority, and a sanctified freedom, would maintain inviolate the harmony of their balanced powers, and cooperate to produce the last perfection which this world allows of political condition. In the stricter and more personal relations of life, husbands and wives, parents and child-

ren, masters and servants, would feel even the humble details of domestic intercourse hallowed and exalted and refined by their association with the sublimest and holiest of truths, the noblest of examples, the purest of impulses ; while, in the relations of general society, and the intercourse of man with man on the open theatre of life, all the virtues that strengthen and embellish society—temperance and chastity, integrity and justice, and ancient truth, and the chief of all the graces, charity—would, under the genial light of Christianity, as of a finer sun, spring up apace, embalming the air with their fragrance, enriching the land with their fruit ; while violence and fraud, idleness and luxury and lust, strife and confusion, and every evil work, would wither from the earth before the blessed influence of those great principles of benevolence and equity : “ Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” “ Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.” Would you behold a meet representation of the effect of true religion universally prevailing on the moral condition of our race, and the moral aspect of the world, you must turn to the pictures of the latter day, which sparkle from the page of prophecy,—pictures, than which all poetry exhibits nothing half so bright, and yet all history contains nothing half so true,—in which we see pourtrayed the Sabbath of creation—the jubilee of the universe—the scenes of Paradise restored—the days of heaven anticipated. “ The mountains shall bring peace to the people,

and the little hills by righteousness." "Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven." War and her dragons shall be driven from the earth, and chained with Satan in the nethermost abyss; while the brooding spirit of love shall far and near encircle the round world, becoming to all nations the very breath of life. The fury-passions which have so long convulsed the earth, heaving up the expanse of human society into a chaos of tumult and strife—a troubled sea that could not rest—shall have perished from among the elements of the social atmosphere; and the vast ocean of earthly things shall be seen reposing from the storm, in the sunshine of the Almighty's smile, reflecting from its bright unwrinkled mirror the image of heaven's own majestic calm. All the glowing imagery, meanwhile, by which prophecy sets forth with such surpassing beauty the glory of the coming age, is nothing else in its substantial fulfilment, but the impress of the gospel on the minds and manners of mankind—the spirit of the gospel infused as a quickening soul into the frame of human society,—the state of righteousness and peace to which every community will approach, in proportion as it is deeply and prevadingly imbued with Christianity: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy

mountain ; *for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.*" *

That the morality of a nation, even on its own account as an object intrinsically excellent and desirable, and as that without which law itself would be of no practical authority and power,† ought to be an object of direct and primary concern to lawgivers and rulers, we shall never cease to maintain and to avow. There are those, however, in the present day, who would limit the prosecution of the national welfare, as an object of legislation and of government, to the mere economical condition of the people—the subsistence, the comfort, and the wealth of the population. Even on their own low and meagre principles, however, we are prepared to meet them, and to say that, even with reference to economical condition, religion affords the surest basis of a nation's welfare. "Godliness," we are assured in the sacred oracles, "is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life which now is, as well as of that which is to come." Nor is it difficult to see, how, according to the natural tendencies of things, the promise which religion has even of the present life is likely to be verified. By the power which we have already seen that she possesses, of awakening and cherishing in the breast of her disciples the spirit of intelligence and thoughtfulness on the one hand, and of a high-toned and habitual mo-

* Isaiah xi. 6—9.

† Quid leges, sine moribus Vanæ, proficiunt.—HOR.

rality on the other, she furnishes them with “the very principles of all legitimate prosperity.” In the intellectual energy which she arouses and cultivates, she gives them the command of what are the highest, the mightiest, the most productive of human powers,—the faculties of the rational and immortal mind,—faculties which, whether acting by themselves, or cooperating with corporeal energies, to the production of what is needful for the support, the comfort, the refreshment, the convenience of the present state, give at once an elevated character, and an enlarged efficiency to all the individual’s exertions and pursuits. Still more, as the mother of pure and elevated morals, does she deserve to be reckoned the progenitress of every kind of lawful and honourable prosperity. I see it proved in the books of the moralists, and the experience of mankind,—recognized, indeed, as part of men’s common sense, and embodied in their code of proverbs and of apologues,—that in the long run, as they say, and upon the whole, the practice of a strict and high morality is the surest way to success and enjoyment in the world. Activity and temperance, industry and integrity, benevolence and magnanimity, prudence and public spirit, rectitude and love, are, in the order of nature, the parents of health, of substance, of reputation, of influence, of domestic and social comfort. We do not assert that, in this mysterious mixture of things, those virtues are always attended with these consequences, or that no one of the latter is ever enjoyed without the existence of the former: the sum

of human experience, however, is clearly in support of the general principle, both by shewing that it holds in the majority of cases, and by enabling us to trace, in those cases in which it is verified, a distinct connection, in the nature of the thing, between the cause and the effect. A high and constant morality, therefore, is the only means on which an individual can reasonably calculate, as likely to lead him to that degree of worldly comfort and success which, in the circumstances of his case, lies within his reach. And as of such a morality religion is the best, the only trustworthy teacher, in that proportion must she be the best, the only trust-worthy guide to be followed by the man “who would live long, and see good days,”—who would embody in his earthly lot, in greatest number and highest degree, the main elements of worldly comfort and enjoyment, a sound mind in a sound body, competency and contentment, gratified affections, and a happy home. Christianity is she who can multiply—who alone can multiply such individuals and such families throughout the land, and, therefore, even by political economy, she is to be honoured as the mother and the nurse of national welfare, the tutelary power of public good.

Such are some notices of the effect which the prevalence of pure religion, and therefore the existence of a well ordered Established Church as the means of promoting pure religion, is fitted to produce upon the national mind, the national morals, and

the national comfort. In connection, however, with the subject last adverted to,—the economical advantage of religion, and therefore of a Religious Establishment,—there is one particular view to which I am directed by the Prospectus of the Lecture to call your attention ; and that view relates to the advantage which these are fitted to confer upon a people, by their effects in preventing Crime and Pauperism.

Here then you are to consider, first, the pecuniary saving which the prevalence of religious feeling and character, and the operation of a Religious Establishment in producing this result, are calculated to effect on these two heads of public expenditure.

I find that the County and Poor's rates in England, during the year 1832, amounted to the sum of £8,622,920, of which there were expended on the poor £7,036,969, that is, more than double the whole revenues of the Church of England. Using the returns from 100 parishes already published in the New Statistical Account as data, we may reckon the present expenditure of our own country upon pauperism as amounting to the annual charge of £170,000, not much less than the whole income of the Church of Scotland. That great reductions may be made on this expenditure, both in the southern and northern divisions of the island, by legislative restrictions, and an improved administration, independently of Christianity altogether,—that, in particular, the great measure of last Parliament, in reference to the English Poor Laws, will, in all probability, be attended with this effect,—we

most cheerfully allow. But no one who considers the nature of the case, especially no one who has attended to the beautiful and triumphant demonstrations of Dr Chalmers on the subject, can fail to perceive, that there is nothing which will so effectually dry up the fountains of public pauperism, and nothing which will so quicken and enlarge the springs of private charity—by a double process rendering the legal provision for the poor unnecessary, which has so long been draining the national resources,—as the more extended power of true religion over the minds and habits of the people, that religion, which, while it inculcates on the rich, by the most persuasive motives, an open-hearted and open-handed generosity, trains the poor to the spirit of virtuous and honourable independence, by setting before them the example of that great Apostle, who, rather than be burdensome even to those on whom he had the most rightful claim for maintenance, “laboured with his hands,”—by reminding them how much “more blessed it is to give than to receive,”—and by plainly telling them, that, “if any man will not work, neither should he eat.” Besides which, every one who has had any personal concern in the management of the poor is aware, how great a proportion of the claims which are made upon the public funds, may be set down as the direct result of vice and crime, and in particular of intemperance and licentiousness. In proportion, therefore, as you spread among the people, not merely the spiritual power, but the outward decencies of Christianity, you cut off one of the most copious and most polluted

of those streams which go to swell the dark and deepening flood of pauperism—you subtract one of the most grievous loads from that accumulated oppression which has sat so long like a night-mare on the breast of English property, paralyzing all its healthful energies ; and which has, step by step, been extending its malignant influence over our own land, so that, while in 1700 there were only three assessed parishes in Scotland, situated upon the borders, and corrupted by the example of the sister country, there were in 1819, judging from the return made in that year by the General Assembly to Parliament, from 250 to 300 in that condition, comprehending about one-half of the entire population. Add to these considerations, the advantage which may be taken of an Establishment, and which has been taken of it in our own country, for raising and administering, in the most effectual way, a fund of voluntary charity, which, if the Establishment were adequate to the population, might altogether supersede the necessity of a legal rate ; and you have the materials for judging with what advantage, even in a pecuniary sense, to the State an Established Church may be maintained, by the diminution which, in so many ways, it would produce on the expense of national pauperism. Let us have, for four or five years, a sum equal to that which the heritors of Scotland expend annually upon the poor, were it only £100,000, for the purpose of providing for the people an ampler supply of religious instruction, and the Church may safely undertake to relieve them from

four-fifths at least of the annual burden for the time to come.

In regard to the national expenditure on the detection, prosecution, and punishment of crime, I do not know that any statistics are to be had that would enable us to state precisely the whole amount. In the official account of the public expenditure of the united kingdom, I find, under the head of justice, a sum set down, of about one million Sterling, of which, at least two-thirds must be on account of criminal justice, including the cost of the metropolitan police, which, in the year 1832, was about £200,000, the officers of that establishment having, in the course of that year, taken into custody not fewer than 77,543 individuals. But this is only what is paid directly from the national treasury, and in order to have before you the sum total of what public crime costs the country, you must add to the amount already stated, all the expenses incurred by every county, city, and borough in the empire,—on account of offences below the jurisdiction of the national tribunals,—of local courts and local police,—of jails, and executions, and punishments in general. What the amount of these expenses to the whole nation actually is, I have had no means of knowing. Two or three items, however, may assist you in conceiving of their magnitude. That portion of the general expense of crime which fell upon the counties of England and Wales in 1832, would seem, from a return printed by the House of Commons in 1833, to have amounted, in round numbers, to

£500,000, while, by a similar return in 1831, it appears that the money expended by the counties on building, repairing, and fitting up jails and houses of correction, during the thirty years preceding, was not less than £2,500,000. To this amount you have still to add the expense of crime to all the cities and boroughs of the kingdom, with the cost of that portion of the standing army, the maintenance of which is necessary to secure internal tranquillity and order. On the strength of such data as these we cannot be very far mistaken in reckoning the pecuniary burden entailed upon the nation by crimes committed in Great Britain at about two millions annually. The whole expense of crime over the united kingdom has been stated in the House of Commons at £5,000,000 Sterling.* Now, though it is obvious that the diminution of public expenditure under this head would not be in the direct ratio of the diminution of public delinquency, since tribunals and police and jails and penal colonies must be kept up as well for few criminals as for a multitude, yet there are many items which would manifestly be very considerably reduced by an extensive reduction of crime, and especially the item representing what is expended on the actual infliction of punishment. Meanwhile, that the wider diffusion and the deeper penetration of Christian culture through the mass of the community, is in its natural tendency one powerful means of diminishing crime, there is no one who will deny.

* Mr Buckingham's Speech, 3d June 1834.

That it is the *only* effectual means for the purpose,—that mere intellectual instruction will avail nothing to this end,—is proved by all the experience of the age. Let me only remind you of the facts on this subject, developed in “M. Guerey’s Moral Statistics of France,” which recently excited so much attention and interest in this city, and bid those of you who may have access to the work observe how the shades of immorality and crime gather and darken over the map, in almost the exact degree in which he who looks to mere mental education for the regeneration of our race would have expected to find it bright with the hues of purity and excellence. Most justly did Dr Johnson remark, on being told that, in a certain public institution of the metropolis, the children, though otherwise well cared for, had no adequate opportunities of religious education: “To breed up children in this manner is to rescue them from an early grave that they may find employment for the gibbet—from dying in innocence that may perish by their crimes.”

Did our limits permit, we ought, in order to estimate aright the pecuniary saving to the country from the extension of pure Christianity, to take into our account the enormous waste of resources occasioned by those offences of which the law does not take cognizance, although religion does,—delinquencies which go under the name of vice, but which the justice of the country has not denominated crimes. I shall only mention the one fact, that it has been estimated, on carefully collected data, that not less than fifty

millions Sterling is expended in a single year, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, on fermented and intoxicating liquors; and I leave you to conjecture what portion of this mighty sum,—the revenue of an empire,—is sunk in that devouring vortex of intemperance, by which, not the substance merely, but the health, the principles, the respectability, the domestic comfort, the social usefulness of so great a number of our countrymen have been engulfed and overwhelmed. Though very far from joining in the foolish objection to the peculiar schemes of the Temperance Association, that they tend to supersede the operation of religious principle, yet I am sure the warmest advocate of that society will agree in the statement, that the ascendancy of true religion over the minds and manners of a people, will be a better safeguard than any other which can be imagined against the evils of intemperance,—and that, in whatever degree this ascendancy is likely to be promoted by a Religious Establishment, in that degree is such an establishment likely to prove itself a national blessing,—by putting a check to vice in general, and to this most gross and contemptible, yet most ruinous and destructive vice in particular, and by so, among other still more important advantages, saving from worse than waste, an overwhelming amount of pecuniary resources, which, otherwise directed, might contribute incalculably to the comfort of families, and the profit of the nation.

Reverting, however, to the effects of religion, and, therefore, of a well-ordered Religious Establishment,

on pauperism and crime strictly so called, I have to observe, that the least evil connected with the operation of those public arrangements for relieving the one, and arresting the other, which the spread of Christian principle is calculated to supersede, is the expense which they involve. The Prospectus has well remarked concerning them, that, in addition to their costliness, "they must always be more or less vexatious in their operation, and demoralizing in their influence." The truth of this description in reference to the administration of public and legal relief to the poor is undeniably obvious. Every wholesome system of poor-laws must be so contrived as to render the condition of a pauper uncomfortable and unpleasant, to make it be considered a degradation and disaster to have recourse to their provisions for relief,—a calamity to be endured by the virtuous poor with resignation, when it shall be the will of God to send it, but still to be avoided by the intensest possible exertion of their faculties, by a struggle for independence, maintained to the very uttermost extremity. This necessary condition of every system for the support of pauperism which shall not ultimately prove a curse and gangrene to the country,—not to speak of the exposure which the condition of a pauper involves to slight, and injury, and the manifold caprices of a petty official tyranny,—must always make "the quality" of public charity "strained,"—the bread of dependence bitter. And while to such a system the epithet "vexatious" is thus justly applied, not less does it deserve the worse

characteristic of “demoralizing.” The spirit of honourable independence among the poorer orders, has always been found one of the firmest allies, and most effectual protectors, of every virtuous principle and habit. Its subversion is wont to be accompanied by a general sinking of the character, a lowering of its tone—an enervation of its moral vigour. A great proportion, moreover, of those who have fallen into the condition of dependants on the public bounty having been reduced to this condition by the effects of their own vice and profligacy, and finding that the public provision is enough to guarantee them, at least against absolute wretchedness and want as the result of their immoralities, draw from the fact a miserable yet efficacious encouragement to repeat the criminal act,—to persevere in the criminal habit, and not only so, but to propagate the pestilence—to spread the moral contamination among those who, though in a less discreditable way, have fallen into the same caste with them, and so been dragged into an exposure which they would not have courted to those “evil communications which corrupt good morals.”

In so far, therefore, as the wider prevalence of practical religion, and the effects of an Established Church as instrumental towards this blessed result, shall supersede the operation of a legalized provision for the poor, they take the place of a system, which is by its very nature the occasion not merely of great expense, but of great distress and great demoralization. But the very same remark may be made of them with still greater

justice, when we regard them as superseding the legal system for repressing and punishing crime. In reference to this department also, consider, besides the saving of expense, the saving of misery which would be thus effected—the moral wretchedness involved in the act and habit of offence—the natural suffering contained in the apprehension and endurance of the penalty. In 1818, there were committed to the jails of the United Kingdom 107,000 persons,* and the number, I believe, has been increasing since then. In the seven years that ended in 1832, there were more than 90,000 individuals, in England and Wales, convicted before the higher tribunals of the country, and condemned to scourging or imprisonment, to exile or death, of whom 414 actually perished by the hand of the executioner. Sum up, if you can, the amount of corporeal and mental suffering endured in the commission and as the consequence of the offences perpetrated by this multitude of criminals, and especially the untold and unimagined horrors of the felon's fate—the “groanings of the prisoners appointed to die”—the hideous and ghastly circumstances of the final scene—and the terrible transition, in too many instances, from enduring the last extreme of human vengeance to the suffering of the direr vengeance of Almighty God; and where is the benevolent and patriotic mind that will not reckon the diminution of this mass of

* Report of Society for Bettering the Condition of Prisons in 1820, p. 14.

misery by the diminution of the mass of crime, and therefore in consistency with the rights of justice and society, a service rendered by religion to the State, such as cannot be estimated in gold and silver. Consider, finally, the saving of moral corruption which will be effected to whatever extent the preventive influence of Christianity shall deliver men from the actual endurance of civil punishment. The power of religion in preventing crime, is, of course, just its power to prevent that depravation of moral character, of which the commission of crime is the fruit ; while, in addition to this, it saves those over whom it has had thus much influence from exposure to that farther depravation of character, of which the punishment of crime is too often the occasion. Besides the demoralizing influence which the endurance of public punishment exerts upon its victims, in extinguishing the sense of shame, and sending them forth upon society as marked and branded men, separated by a great fixed gulf from the virtuous community,—it is well known that many of the prison and penal establishments of the country up to this very day, and almost all of them to a very recent period, were actually schools and universities of crime, in which, under one another's instruction, the victims graduated downwards day by day through the steps of that malignant education, of which the degrees are so many nearer approaches to hell ; and by continual action and reaction of depraving energy, hardened and sharpened one another's powers of sin, till they walked forth at last in leagues of licentiousness and fellowships of crime—the

finished adepts of profligacy—the unblushing corruptors of social purity—the intrepid violators of social peace. That much has been done—that much may be done—that it is the duty of every wise government to do its very utmost—for improving the discipline of prisons, I cordially allow ; but it is not a thing to be looked for—the nature of the case forbids it—that the depraving influences which haunt the atmosphere of the jail or the penal colony—of every place where criminals meet and have intercourse together,—can ever be finally extirpated ; so that on this ground, as on so many others, all reason and all experience cry aloud in the ears of nations, that prevention is better than punishment,—that religion is more effectual than law to maintain the order of society, to keep the peace of the world.

In all the remarks which we have hitherto made on the tendency, first of religion, and then of a Church Establishment as an instrument and handmaid of religion, to promote the welfare of a nation, we have endeavoured to establish this tendency from the natural order of events,—the natural sequences of cause and effect. We are never to forget, however, in such a discussion, that all this order of events, that all these sequences of cause and effect, proceed under the administration of an ever-observant and ever-acting Providence,—the Providence of Him at whose almighty nod empires rise and fall, “who changeth the times and the seasons,” “the God of gods, the Lord of kings,” “the Judge of all the earth,” “the Governor among the nations.” To enjoy the favour and appro-

bation, then, of this Omnipotent Ruler of the Universe must be, independently altogether of our capacity of tracing the operation of second causes towards this effect, the sure, the only sure foundation of a nation's secure and stable prosperity. We have already directly asserted on this very ground the policy of giving to the true religion a National Establishment, as that which, viewed as a separate act and on its intrinsic merits, we have ample reason to think, is well-pleasing to the Universal Governor. We now assert the same thing indirectly, by reminding you that what above all things else in the condition of a nation attracts the divine complacency and draws down the divine benediction, is to find that nation's mind imbued with the spirit of a deep pervading piety,—the spirit which it is the object of a Church Establishment to cherish and diffuse. It has been most plausibly argued by great divines, that as public bodies and communities of men, as such, can be rewarded or punished only in this world, it is reasonable to expect that blessing and judgment will be distributed respectively to godly and impious nations with greater uniformity of retribution than seems to mark the dealings of the all-ruling Providence to individual men. With the result of these reasonings the general tenor of Scripture and the general course of history seem, with sufficient accuracy on the whole, to correspond. Yet we are far from doubting that in regard to nations as to individuals, the Great Arbiter of being and event may occasionally allow those who seem the proudest rebels

against "his throne and monarchy" to run for a season a dazzling career of apparent prosperity and triumph, while "the people that do know their God may fall by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by spoil many days, to try them and to purge and to make them white unto the time of the end." Yet even in circumstances such as these, he who loves his country wisely and religiously will feel, that it is better far for a people to suffer with the approbation of God than to triumph under his frown. It will be the Christian's conviction and his consolation, that whatever disaster may be accumulated on the present, whatever clouds may lower upon the future, the people "whose heart is right with God and steadfast in his covenant" is still the object of his divine complacency, and the subject of his recorded benediction. "Blessed is that people whose God is the Lord;" while, on the other hand, the impious and apostate nation which for a time may seem to flourish amidst the intensest blaze of wealth and power and victory and fame, holds all its guilty splendours under the withering curse of the Almighty; the foundations of its prosperity are in the dust, the throne of its dominion is "set in slippery places," and the moment is perpetually impending which shall "hurl it down into destruction." Even in those cases in which the number of God's genuine worshippers in a land may be very far from warranting us to call the nation a religious, a Christian people, it is impossible to say of how much public good the favour which God bears to them may

be the cause. These are the men to bless their people—these the men to save their country. These are the salt of the earth—these the lights of the world. Had ten such men been found in Sodom, the fires of wrath would have been quenched, the thunderbolts of God arrested. The principles of the divine administration are still the same, and still, therefore, we may be sure on the strength of that recorded case, that practically the best Christian is the best patriot,—that the most precious members of the communities of men are the holiest members of the Church of Christ.

Such, then, are some notices of the way in which “Righteousness exalteth a nation,” in which religion promotes the public interest. But we have proved already how greatly religion itself is likely to be extended in its influence on the mind of a people by becoming the subject of an adequate and well-ordered civil establishment. From these two demonstrated propositions, therefore, I now infer the conclusion, that an Established Church is calculated to be of the greatest advantage to a nation, by the diffusion among the people, through its instrumentality, of Christian faith and Christian principle. I trust, that, however imperfectly this great argument has been unfolded, enough has been said to make it plain, that the erection and the maintenance of such an Establishment, is an object of the noblest and the purest patriotism. It is the calumny of the infidel that the love of country is a virtue not acknowledged by the Gospel—a calumny

refuted by the prayers of Paul,—refuted by the tears of Jesus. There is this distinction, indeed, between most of the instances of secular patriotism celebrated in the annals of men, and the examples of Christian patriotism recorded in the book of God, that the hero's and the Christian's love of their common country pursue different interests as the chief objects of their patriotic care. The one labours and suffers and dies to protect the liberties and independence,—to advance the dominion and renown of his native land. The other toils and prays, and is ready to die, and willing, were it lawful, even to be “accursed for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh,” that to his countrymen may here belong the blessedness of that people whose God is the Lord, and to multitudes of them hereafter a place and a name among “the nations of the saved.” Let this highest style of patriotism, the natural instinct baptized into the Christian grace, be ours. Let us feel it to be a nobler and more satisfactory distinction for our country that it should be the most Christian, than that it should be the most opulent, the most powerful, the most renowned among the nations of the earth. With a view to this high end let us rejoice and give thanks that the constitution of our country has been constructed on the principle that the Christianity of the people is the main element of national safety and national prosperity; and let us cooperate with zeal and activity in every plan which may be put in operation for carrying into full effect this noble principle of Christian policy. “As the

Sanctuary," to use the illustration of an old divine, "was set in the midst of the camp, even so religion is the heart of the State." * If we love our country, then, let us guard with the most jealous care that heart of the commonwealth and fountain of its vital blood, the Sanctuary of the Lord. Let the sacred pavilion tower for ever in her holy stateliness above the tents of Israel, bright with Jehovah's presence, and vocal with his oracles. Nor let us spare "to enlarge the place of her tent, and to stretch forth the curtains of her habitations—to lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes," till in her spacious courts there shall be room and verge enough for an assembled nation to adore—for all the consecrated tribes to bow before "the testimony of Israel, and give thanks unto the name of the Lord."

Now as a counterpoise to all the considerations I have urged, I find only one circumstance alleged upon the opposite side in addition to those which we have already set aside as irrelevant; and that is the tendency of Establishments to produce division and disunion. "Whatever grievance," exclaimed a leading champion of the cause, hastening to settle this part of the controversy by a single blow, "tends to divide an empire, its continuance is impolitic." † Now, the whole truth

* Lightfoot's Harmony of the Old Testament, Numb. II.

† Dr Heugh's Speech at the Formation of the Perth Voluntary Association.

of this remark depends upon the one word "grievance," which it contains. If any institution is "a grievance," its continuance is impolitic, on far more deep and solid grounds than that it tends to divide the opinions and the feelings of a people. But if it shall be proved, as the general idea of a Religious Establishment has been proved, to involve nothing that deserves the name, nothing oppressive or unjust,—if it be in its intrinsic nature and its immediate tendency, as we have seen that a Religious Establishment is—a public safeguard and a public blessing, then let a man beware before he calls a thing impolitic, because its result may be to divide and disunite. Else what shall he say of the greatest benefit (thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!) upon mankind ever bestowed: "I am not come," said our Blessed Redeemer, "to send peace upon the earth, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's foes shall be those of his own house." Yet, while in the dissension and division which the existence of a Religious Establishment has produced, we can perceive no argument to be dreaded, we do perceive in it a fact to be deplored. Accustomed to look with a most friendly eye on the Secession Church, and knowing well the Christian ability and worth which it contains, I will confess that I had once indulged, with much delight, the hope that the time would come,—and come ere very long,—when, by the progress of that spirit which had begun

so powerfully to leaven the Establishment, the Church and the Secession might be reunited in the bond of a visible as of a vital unity. It is our happiness to know that there are even yet, in all the Seceding Churches, many ministers and more members—that there are whole Communion, the genuine representatives of the Old Secession, who are yet found “standing in the ancient paths,” and “asking for the good old way ;” and we hail with warmest satisfaction the symptoms of the time approaching, when the fruit of the present discussion shall be not division but reconciliation, and when all the approvers of *a* National Church shall be united in *the* National Church. That with the majority the case is different,—that they should have compelled us into this distressing warfare,—we regret upon our own account, we regret upon theirs, we regret upon account of our common Christianity. You remember the time, not many years ago, when it seemed as if the visitation of another spirit were descending on the Church ; when, to use the language of a great antagonist, “ the genius of the times seemed to be distinguished beyond all former precedent since the days of the apostles, by the union of Christians in the promotion of their common cause, and their readiness to merge all minor differences in the cultivation of great principles and the prosecution of great objects ; when around the banner of the cross were gathered, without distinction of name and sect, the called, the chosen, the faithful, prepared to forget all other differences but that between the Saviour’s friends and his foes ; and, like fel-

low-soldiers gathered from the distant, but not hostile provinces of one great empire, to mingle their prayers, their counsels, and their efforts, in coming up to the help of the Lord—to the help of the Lord against the mighty.* The Tyrant saw, and trembled for his tottering throne, and the master-piece of his defence was to sow division in the hostile camp,—with how deplorable success look round you and behold. See how the lines of the Christian host are rent, and the confederate banners are moving far asunder; how the provinces of the Anointed's empire are turning their courage, their counsels, and their arms aside from the grand contest with the common foe, to fatal and intestine strife among themselves, and the holy hill of Zion, over all its borders, is turned into a field of conflict—a theatre of war, of war among brethren, in which the watch-word seems to be, “spare no arrows.” How refreshing to think that it shall not be always so,—that a better day shall dawn ere long, “when the envy of Ephraim shall depart, and the enmity of Judah be no more,—when Ephraim shall not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim,” but united in a common cause, and against their common enemies, “they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines, and spoil them of the East together.” Meanwhile, union is not to be purchased, on either side, by the compromise of conscience, or the sacrifice of truth. Only let us make it our endeavour, even in the prosecution of this unhappy contro-

* Hall's Works, vol. III., p. 455.

versy, “to hold the truth in love,”—to commend what we believe to be the doctrines of the Bible, by exemplifying the spirit of the Bible,—and to live in the confident anticipation of the time, when every misapprehension shall be rectified, and every animosity extinguished,—when, in the presence of their common Father, and their common Lord, Christians, the most widely divided now, and the most bitterly opposed, shall embrace each other with tears of love and reconciliation,—and when, in its fullest and profoundest meaning, our Saviour’s prayer shall be fulfilled :—“ I pray not for them alone, but for all who shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us !

THE END.

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LECTURE IX.

ON THE UNION BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE STATE AS IT EXISTS IN SCOTLAND.

THE object of the preceding Lectures has been to explain the nature of a scriptural union between the Church and the State—to establish the lawfulness of such union—to enforce the duty of forming it, and to shew forth the advantages which it is calculated to produce. The remaining portion of the course is to be directed to the application of the argument to the Church of Scotland, embracing the questions, How far the union of the Church and State as it exists with us, is consistent with the principles which have been laid down? and How far the parochial economy of the Church of Scotland is fitted to promote the ends of a scriptural union, pointing out wherein it is defective, and in what manner its complete efficiency may be restored?

The special subject allotted to me, is thus set forth in the Prospectus:—"On the union between the

Church and the State as it exists in Scotland, by the Civil and Ecclesiastical Constitution of that country, embracing these two questions :—1st, How far the Church of Scotland is indebted to the State for support, pecuniary or otherwise—how far the maintenance of the Church, by means of her own property, is really burdensome to the Public? and 2^d, How far the Church of Scotland has succeeded in preserving her just rights and privileges unimpaired by the conditions of her Civil Establishment?”

In proceeding to the consideration of the first of these questions, I at once gladly admit, that the Church of Scotland *is* indebted to the State for the advantages derived from the public recognition of her doctrines, and the public countenance given to her institutions; for the aid of the civil authority in affording protection to her ministrations, and securing the outward sanctity of the Sabbath; in providing places of worship for her people, and a respectable and independent maintenance to her ministers. I do not stop to inquire how far, in regard to these two last mentioned particulars, the State has fallen short of the duty incumbent on it, according to the principles of a right union between the Church and the State, as this will more properly fall within the scope of a succeeding Lecture; but to the extent to which provision *has been* made in regard to these, I acknowledge that the Church is mainly indebted to the State; for although, in the title of this Lecture, the second division of the question now under consideration is thus stated,—“how far the mainten-

ance of the Church, by means of *her own property*, is really burdensome to the public,"—I do not understand that it is thereby intended that the endowment enjoyed by the ministers of the Church, or the right to have places of worship upheld by assessment upon the land, is of the nature of *private property*. On the contrary, I consider that whatever property has been appropriated and secured by *public law* for a *public purpose*, is truly the property of the State, and liable to be by the State employed in the way most effectual for promoting the true objects of all government; and that of this character is the greater part, or nearly the whole, of the property of the Church of Scotland. A distinction, however, must be taken between property appropriated by public law, and property bequeathed or gifted by individuals, but not held in virtue of public law, further than in so far as that law gives protection to *all* rights of property. Where a private individual destines a portion of his wealth to a certain specific object, his will must be given effect to, and is only liable to modification by the State, in so far as it may be inconsistent with the law of God, or in so far as the carrying it into execution might be injurious to the public. Where, however, the State confers a grant of part of the *public property*, or concedes the power of levying certain duties or funds, which could not be possessed independent of public authority; and where it further appropriates these not to the personal benefit or advantage of particular individuals or societies, but to purposes of public benefit, it necessarily

remains with the State to determine, always however, on principles of duty as well as of sound policy, how long such funds shall continue so appropriated. Thus, the assessment for support of the poor, is only leviable by virtue of express public law; and the *object* in view is not the personal advantage of any special class of individuals,—though that results from it,—but the general good of the State, which is held to be advanced by providing a secure and certain support to those helpless and decayed members of the community, who, by reason of age and infirmity, have not wherewith to maintain themselves. Now, although, if a private individual bequeath a certain sum for the poor of a particular parish, his bequest is not justly defeasible by the State, except in so far as the manner of its appropriation, (as for instance for endowing a foundling hospital,) or the extent to which similar bequests by others may have been carried, may give it a tendency injurious to the community; yet the *public* provision made for the poor by the State on grounds of public policy, cannot be considered as the *property* of the poor in the sense of private property, but may be by the State justly and lawfully diverted to other objects, should it clearly appear that such appropriation will be more to the advantage of the community. In the same way as to the Church. The provision in favour of the Church by the State, is not for the private or personal benefit of her ministers, though that does flow from it, but for the great public end of instructing the whole body of the people in the truths, and training

them in the faith of the gospel of Christ, thereby promoting among them, in the highest possible degree, and by the only truly effective means, the practice of morality and virtue, and laying the only sure foundation for their temporal, as well as their eternal, well-being. Then, although, if a private individual destine part of his property to promoting the religious interests of part of the community, by endowing a Church, or establishing a religious professorship, his will must be protected and executed, unless it could be shewn to be positively injurious to the community, and the State could not justly divert it to another purpose than that to which it had been devoted by the owner ; yet, on the other hand, in regard to the *public* provision for *public* instruction in religion, it does not appear to me, though I am aware that I differ on this point from many whose judgement I highly respect, that there is in it that character of private property, which should *of itself* be an insuperable bar to the State diverting it to other objects. The obligation, therefore, on the State to maintain the Church secure in the enjoyment of the rights and property which she now holds by virtue of public law, does not appear to me to rest on the same principles which maintain untouched the private rights of individuals ; but it is founded, as I conceive, upon principles even more sacred than the right of property itself, and to which that right may, in some measure, be made to yield :—namely, the responsibility of all Governments to conform to the will, and advance the glory of that Almighty Ruler, “ *by whom kings*

reign and princes decree justice,” and their duty to the people whom they govern, to promote, in the most effectual way, their religious and moral cultivation, the only permanent source of a nation’s prosperity and happiness. This I conceive to be a much broader as well as a much sounder foundation on which to rest the obligation of the State, for it extends not merely to the preservation of what the Church may at present possess, but to whatever may be necessary for fully and completely effecting the object to be attained. At the same time, the long continued, uninterrupted, time-hallowed, possession of the Church, *does* give to her rights, in the feelings of mankind, something of that sanction which is one of the surest bulwarks of private property, and which ought not to be violated except on considerations of the most vital public polity; although, in point of abstract *principle*, it will not warrant the classing of the rights of the Church, dependent on public law, on the same footing with the private property of individuals.

Then, in regard to the rights and property of the Church of Scotland, it is no doubt true, that in many instances, and in many countries, the right to tithes had its origin in the bequest of private individuals; but so far as we have any evidence, the right of the Church to tithes in Scotland did generally originate in public law; and, at all events, both as to tithes and as to upholding of places of worship, the rights of the Established Church of Scotland are dependent on public statutes enacted for the public behoof. On the

principles, therefore, which I have above referred to, I admit that, for these advantages, the Church *is* indebted to the State, and that the rights enjoyed by the Church do, in a certain sense, form a *burden* on the State; yet I proceed with confidence to shew how little *burdensome* to the public, in the ordinary and proper meaning of the term, is the maintenance of the Church by means of this her property.

The means of the Church has been estimated in round numbers, at about £200,000 annually, a sum which, if at once thrown into the treasury, would not afford to the public any appreciable relief from their existing burdens, while it procures for the nation, an extent of public good far greater than any expenditure of an equal sum, out of the whole forty-six millions of which our public revenue consists, being about one *thirty-second* part of what is annually devoted to the maintenance of the army. To understand fully, however, how little *burdensome* the raising of this amount truly is to the public, in consequence of the peculiar source from which it mainly proceeds, and the mode in which it is levied, more especially when compared with the state of other kingdoms as to this matter, it is necessary to attend to the history and present condition of tithes in this country, from which, with a few exceptions, such as that which occurs in this city, the income of the ministers, in so far as secured by public provision, is derived.

The right to tithes, as it originally existed in Scotland, and as it still exists in many other countries, was

a right to a tenth of the produce of the soil, leviable in kind, *i. e.* leviable, not in the shape of money equal in value to the tenth, but in the actual produce itself, as every tenth sheaf of corn, and the like. In this form, no tax can be more impolitic and oppressive. As a direct and heavy tax on all capital and industry employed in agriculture, it operates as a powerful check to the improvement and cultivation of land. From the mode, also, of levying it, even under the best regulations, it necessarily produces many evils,—exposing crops to great injury, and the cultivator to serious loss,—almost inevitably creating heart-burning and disputes between the pastor and his flock, and most materially marring his usefulness as a minister of the gospel. This was the state of the right to tithes in this country at the Reformation. Instead, however, of these being drawn, as originally intended, by a parson or rector residing in the parish, and performing the duties of pastor, the parochial benefices which carried right to the tithes of the respective parishes, had been transferred to the bishops and their chapters, and to the numerous religious establishments of monks, friars, and nuns. These bishops and establishments thereby came in place of the proper parson or rector, drawing the tithes, and merely paying a stipend or salary to a curate or vicar, to perform the duties of minister of the parish. At the date of the Reformation, there were only 262 parochial benefices not thus appropriated, or rather *misappropriated*, to the use of bishops, abbots, monks, friars, and nuns, who, in general, did no

duty whatsoever to the parish in return, beyond paying a small portion of the tithes drawn from it to the substitute who performed divine services therein. Besides the fruits of these parochial benefices, the bishops and the religious establishments possessed also a large extent of landed property. All this was, shortly after the Reformation, taken possession of by the Crown, and, except in so far as regarded the *bishops' lands*, gifted out to the nobles and courtiers of the day. As to the tithes, they were acknowledged by the King and Parliament, to be the "*patrimony*" of the Church; but, nevertheless, a device was fallen upon, to retain the enjoyment and possession of them. The King conferred on his nobility and favourites, grants of the possessions of the Abbacies, Priories, and other Ecclesiastical Establishments, erecting them into what were termed Temporal Lordships, and including in the grants, the benefices which had, previous to the Reformation, been appropriated to these establishments. These grantees, or Lords of Erection, as they were then called, had no antecedent title to this property, and they merely got the right to the tithes which had formerly been drawn by the religious establishments, as a gift, and by being substituted in the place of these establishments, as the titular parsons or rectors of the several parishes which had been annexed to the establishments. They became, in reality, titular parsons of the parishes, though, as laymen, they were incapable of performing the duty, and their descendants and successors, to this day, still hold the character,

and retain the name of Titulars. The rights thus conferred on these titulars, were not only purely gratuitous, but they were expressly qualified by this condition, inherent in the nature of the right, that the tithes drawn by them were primarily applicable to making provision for the minister doing the duty of the parish, and liable to be resumed in whole or in part, as might at any future period become necessary, for the religious instruction of the people.

Against this, to the State most useless and unwise appropriation of the revenues and property of the Popish Church, John Knox and his brother Reformers strenuously remonstrated. They, with a noble and enlightened patriotism, which renders still blacker the grasping and selfish avariciousness of the king and his nobles, proposed that these should be devoted, *not merely* to the maintenance of the *ministry*, but principally to the additional endowment of the Universities, to the establishment of Schools in every parish, and a College in every notable town; to the building and upholding of places of worship, and to the support of the poor. Even, however, in advancing a claim to the funds of the Popish Church for those great objects of national improvement and national welfare, they, in the very first place, put in an earnest petition for the relief of the unfortunate cultivators on whom the burden of the tithe so oppressively lay. In the first Book of Discipline, presented to the nobility in 1560, they, under the head of the "Rents and Patrimony of the Church," set forth as follows:—

“ But before we enter on this head, we must crave of your Honours, in the name of the Eternal God, and of his son Christ Jesus, that ye have respect to your poor brethren, the labourers and manurers of the ground, who, by thir cruel Papists, have before been opprest, that their life to them hath been dolorous and bitter : If ye will have God author and approver of this Reformation, ye must not follow their footsteps, but ye must have compassion on your brethren, appointing them to pay reasonable teinds, that they may find some benefit of Christ Jesus now preached unto them. With the grief of our hearts we hear that some gentlemen are now as cruel over their tenants as ever were the Papists, requiring of them the teinds, and whatsoever they afore paid to the Kirk, so that the Papistical tyranny shall only be changed into the tyranny of the lord and the laird. We dare not flatter your Honours, neither yet is it profitable for you that we so do : For neither shall *we*, if we permit cruelty to be used—neither shall *ye*, who, by your authority, ought to gainstand such oppression—nor yet they that use the same, escape God’s heavy and fearful judgment.” They then went on to require that all the special exactions in use to be levied by the Popish priests, in addition to the tithes, and which seem to have been continued by their successors, the lay titulars, should be abolished, and to suggest that most admirable measure of commutation of tithes, which was not effected in Scotland for nearly a century later, and which is only in course of being accomplished in Eng-

land and Ireland, at the present hour; but which, nearly three centuries ago, was thus proposed in Scotland—not by landed proprietors, desirous of improving the condition of their tenants—not by statesmen, urged on by the clamours of a justly discontented people, but by the ministers themselves, with no selfish purpose that can possibly be attributed to them, and solely from enlightened views of justice, and an ardent and Christian love and sympathy for the poor and oppressed of that flock over whom God in his good providence had placed them, and whom they had already freed from the bonds of *spiritual* oppression.

In the attempt to secure the means of sufficient instruction to the people, in Churches, Colleges, and Schools, and to obtain relief for them in regard to the exaction of tithes, our Reformers equally failed. The nobles held the property of the Church with too strong a grasp, and even although, as to the tithes, these were possessed under the express obligation of providing sufficient support for the minister serving the cure of their annexed Churches, this obligation was very inadequately fulfilled by the titulars, while the tithes were exacted by them with great rigour and oppressiveness.

On this subject King Charles I., in his first large Declaration, makes the following correct statement: “We having daily heard the grievous complaints of many of our subjects of that kingdom, of all sorts, especially of the gentry and their farmers, who paid their tithes to the nobility, or such others whom they

in that kingdom call Lords of Erection, or Laic Patrons, (here, in England, we call impropiators,) how that, in the leading or gathering of their tithes, these Lords, or Laic Patrons, did use the uttermost of that severity which the law alloweth them, how they would not gather their tithes when the owners of the corn desired them, but when it pleased themselves, by which means the owners, by the unseasonableness of the weather, were many times damnified to the loss of their whole stock, or most part of it; (the law of that kingdom being in that point so strict as no owner may carry away his nine parts, or any part of them, until the proprietor of the tithes have set out his tenth part :) As likewise, understanding at the same time the deplorable state of the ministers of that our kingdom in the point of maintenance, how that they received no tithes in their parishes, but some poor pittance, either by way of a stipendiary benevolence, or else some mean allowance from these Lords of Erection, or Laic Patrons, unworthy of the ministers of the gospel, and which exposed them to all manner of contempt, and a base dependence upon their patrons."

With the view in part perhaps of remedying these evils, but mainly for other objects, proceedings were instituted by King Charles I., immediately after his accession, which issued in his famous decrees-arbitral, ratified in Parliament in 1633, whereby a commutation was effected, and the rights to tiends placed on the footing on which they now stand. By these decrees the proprietors of land were empowered to lead

a valuation of their tithes before certain commissioners, and after deducting one-fifth, afterwards known by the name of the "King's Ease," which his Majesty declares, in his decret, "We, out of our royal and fatherly care for the well of our said kingdom, ordain to be deduced off the saids teinds severally valued, as said is, for the ease and comfort of our subjects," the amount ascertained by these commissioners was fixed by their sentence, as the permanent teinds of the lands, not liable thereafter to be encreased, however greatly the produce might be augmented. This amount so fixed, unalterably and for ever, as a rent charge upon the property, was leviabie from the *landlord*, and it was payable to the titular, except in so far as it might be allocated in stipend to the minister. The titular, on the other hand, had only right to the teind so commuted, under deduction of the minister's stipend, but he was now further laid under an obligation to sell the teind leviabie by him from the lands of others to the proprietors of the lands themselves, at the rate of *nine* years purchase of the yearly amount of the teind as valued or commuted. The proprietors were thus entitled to acquire that right to their own teinds, previously belonging to the titular, but subject to the condition on which these were held by them,—of being liable to be resumed at the discretion of the Court of Commissioners of Teinds, for additional provision to the minister. The general result of these measures was, that the levying of tithe in kind, with all its harassing accompaniments, entirely ceased—that the

teind was made convertible into a fixed annual payment, not liable to increase from improved cultivation—that it was payable directly by the landlord, who further obtained a right to redeem it from the titular at nine years purchase, subject to resumption for the stipend of the minister; and that the minister had a stipend legally secured to him, and leviable directly from the landed proprietor without the necessity of any collision with the cultivator of the soil. From having no experience of a different system, we, in this country, are almost insensible to the great advantages secured to the proprietors and their tenants by this admirable arrangement; though, if we but turn our eyes to Ireland, we may form some idea of the evils from which we have been delivered, and the immense benefits which, apart altogether from the extremely low rate of commutation, have been thereby secured to the agricultural classes of the community. The teind thus commuted, was a charge affecting land antecedent to any rights which can now be founded on by the existing proprietors. By its commutation into a fixed annual payment, it became like a feu-duty, or other annual prestation due to an overlord. In the purchase of property, its value could be calculated and deducted in estimating the price to be offered with perfect accuracy; while in regard to those proprietors who purchased their teinds from the titulars, though they were liable to have them resumed for augmentations of stipend, they acquired them under this express condition, and were entitled to force a sale to them-

selves *at nine years' purchase*, so that, in general, they have found it a most advantageous arrangement. The teind then allocated to the support of the minister, is truly a reserved property in the shape of a fixed annual rent charge. All existing rights to land have been acquired exclusive of, and under deduction of it, so that it is not at all of the nature of a tax coming *out of the property of the landowners*, and it is levied in a way not in the slightest degree oppressive or burdensome to the community. The feuar might as reasonably complain of the feu-duty reserved to the superior in the original titles to his feu, as being an unjust tax upon his property, as the landed proprietor of the commuted teind. In neither case is the payment *burdensome*, in the proper sense of the term, and the only difference which exists is in favour of the payment to the ministers, inasmuch as the feu-duty is payable without any return being demandible, while, for the teind payable as stipend, a return must be made to the community in the shape of religious ministrations. To appreciate the importance of this consideration, I would beg, in concluding this branch of my subject, to call your attention to the comparative advantage to the community of that portion of the revenue of the Popish Church, which has been left since the Reformation in the hands of the titulars, or lay parsons, without any obligation for services in return, and that which has, drop by drop, been drawn from them and appropriated to the support of the ministers

of the gospel, under the express obligation of devoting their services to the public.

I say nothing as to what *might* have been the state of this country had the magnificent and patriotic scheme of Knox been carried into effect,—had a sufficient religious superintendence been provided for the *whole* body of the people,—schools established in every parish, sufficiently endowed to secure, in all cases, the highest attainments and qualifications,—superior Academies, or Colleges, in every considerable town, and properly endowed Professorships in our Universities, with bursaries for the encouragement and advancement of youths of talent and genius. I say nothing of all this, but content myself with viewing what *has* taken place, and considering which of the two modes of appropriating the teinds of the Church acted upon at the Reformation, has been most advantageous to the public.

I have already mentioned, that these teinds were originally granted to the nobles and men of influence at King James' Court, and but for the condition annexed to the right so given, of their liability for the support of the minister, they would have belonged to the successors of these parties in absolute property. A portion, however, was allotted to the ministers of the gospel, which, in conformity to that condition, has been gradually augmented by resumption of the teinds from the titulars, or those who have come in their place. The titulars by whom the rest, and, for a long period, the far greater portion was enjoyed, being generally persons of high rank and large possessions, and

who, after the union of the Crowns, chiefly resided in the metropolis of the empire, the teinds thus gratuitously conferred on them, in reality went to increase rentals, already considerable, for the purpose of being spent beyond the bounds of Scotland, and in a way not always the best fitted to benefit society. I shall suppose, however, that they all resided and spent their incomes in the country whence they were drawn,—that they never employed the additional means thus conferred on them in promoting habits of dissipation, or encouraging vice,—that from generation to generation they stimulated the industry of the people among whom they dwelt, by a judicious expenditure of their revenues and improvement of their properties; and that they appropriated a portion of the funds in question to relieve the wants of the poor, each in his day and generation thus consuming and employing his teinds, and dropping into the grave, having done all the good, and little of the evil, which generally proceed from the common run of men, producing no material effect on the permanent prosperity, character, or happiness of the nation. I thus admit, that in a mere *economical* point of view, the portion of the teinds possessed by these titulars and their successors, must be held as so far beneficially administered; but, in *this* respect, that possessed by the ministers has been administered at least equally beneficially; and there is this great and essential difference, that while the one class conferred no benefit on society, other than that arising from the ordinary expenditure of the fund, the

other class, besides *this* benefit in an *equal* degree to the extent of their share of it, bestowed the most essential benefits of a totally different and far higher description, and were bound to do so by the very tenure of their possession.

If we considered merely the humanizing influence of the residence of a thousand well educated men distributed over the whole length and breadth of the land, each in his own parish, and in districts in which otherwise none would be found of higher condition, or better education than the ordinary tenants of the soil, the advantage to the community would be great indeed. But when we further consider, that from their station and character as recognised ministers of the gospel, that influence is peculiarly strong; that from age to age they have been the never-failing instructors of the young,—the friends and advisers of those of riper years,—the support of the aged,—the guardians of the poor,—the consolers of the afflicted—pouring the balm of comfort into the wounds of sorrow,—smoothing the pillow of the bed of death, and, above all, from week to week, from year to year, from century to century, unceasingly proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation,—holding aloft, in every corner of the land, the banner of the cross,—rearing the people in the faith of the gospel of Christ, and as race after race is swept into the grave, gathering many souls into the garner of the Lord,—we cannot hesitate, in regard to the assertion, that *their* portion of the teinds which has secured all this incalculable good is *burdensome* to the public, to say at

once,—*Not so,—Not so,—Not a BURDEN, but a BLESS-
ING.*

The next question to which I am appointed to direct my attention is, “How far the Church of Scotland has succeeded in preserving her just rights and privileges unimpaired by the conditions of her Civil Establishments?” The true character of a rightly Established Church, is that of “a Church (I quote the words of Dr M'Crie) countenanced, recognised, and supported by the State, for the purpose of enabling it more effectually to gain its proper object,—that of instructing the body of the people in the gospel of Christ, and governing them by his laws, thereby promoting at once their eternal and temporal welfare, and thus contributing indirectly, but powerfully, to the benefit of civil society and the welfare of the State, by checking vice at the fountain, forming habits of sobriety and virtue, and producing conscientious and cheerful subjection to public authority,” * and to the perfect accomplishment of this end, it is necessary that she should be left freely and without interference from without, to exercise the means and privileges wherewith she has been intrusted for these purposes by the Great Head of the Church. It is not to be expected that any institution in which man must have so great a share can possibly be perfect. Religion itself is corrupted in his hands, and I do not pretend that the Establishment in Scotland, though in few countries more pure, is

* Patronage Report, p. 366.

without blemish or defect. On the contrary, I set out by at once admitting, with reference to the footing on which the Church of Scotland is at present established, that in *one* point of considerable moment, she has *not* succeeded in maintaining unimpaired her just rights and privileges. One of the privileges conferred on the Church by her Divine Head, is the right, to the exclusion of all external power, of appointing her own ministers. I do not enter into the question as to what part of this privilege is to be exercised by the people, and what part by the office-bearers of the Church; but all who hold the government of the Church to be of Divine institution, must be agreed on *this* point, that the matter of chusing ministers is committed to *the Church herself*, to be exercised *within the Church*, and to the exclusion of all interference *external to the Church*. Any such interference is equally an infringement of her privileges, whether it be by a single patron or by many, and the admission of it is equally to that extent a sacrifice of her independence. Now, the Church of Scotland has *not* succeeded in maintaining this privilege *unimpaired*. She has declared, that “the order which God’s word craves,” as to the election of ministers, “cannot stand with patronage and presentation to benefices,”—she has remonstrated—she has struggled, but she has *not succeeded* in preserving herself from the yoke of patronage. On this point, though on this point alone, I admit that our opponents have somewhat to say against us; but while I acknowledge that in this respect the Church has failed to pre-

serve her just privileges unimpaired by the conditions of her Civil Establishment, I most confidently deny that this infringement of the privileges of the Church is at all a necessary consequent of establishment by the State, and, on the contrary, I maintain that it is a result as likely to arise in a Voluntary as in an Established Church.

That an Established Church *may* subsist without patronage, is proved by the case of different foreign Churches, and by the state of our own at the time of the second Reformation. At that period, the great principle of an Establishment was more fully recognised, and more triumphant than it ever had been before, or than it has been since. Not only was the Church recognised and established by the State more securely, and with higher privileges, than before, but the nation, as a nation, entered into a covenant, whereby they devoted themselves, in their *national* capacity, to the service of God,—bound themselves to maintain and defend his worship,—and formed a solemn league, or treaty, with the neighbouring nations of England and Ireland, whereby they engaged themselves to each other and to God, *as nations, and by national measures*, to promote his cause, and to establish in the three kingdoms, *by national laws*, uniformity of worship and Church government, “according to the word of God and the practice of the best reformed Churches.” They also practically and sincerely made the *will* of God the *rule*, and the *glory* of God the main *object* of their legislative enactments, to the excellence of

which we can confidently appeal for the proof of the practically beneficial effects of such a course ; and yet this very period,—when the grand principle on which an Establishment is based was so pre-eminently triumphant,—was *the* period, and the *only* period, when patronage was absolutely and utterly abolished, as it was by the act 1649, and the Church established in its most perfect state of freedom and independence.

Not only, however, is the existence of an Establishment perfectly compatible with entire freedom from patronage, but, in reality, this evil had its first origin, and is, at the present day, largely perpetuated in purely Voluntary Churches. The first notice we have of the existence of patronage, as giving a right to the presentation of a minister, is in regard to private chapels, or oratories, endowed by the voluntary liberality of individuals for the accommodation of themselves, their families, and immediate dependants. These chapels, or places of prayer, were generally at some distance from the parish church, and did not properly form part of the regular Establishment. In endowing them, the owners naturally desired to retain the appointment of the person to officiate, and to sanction this was the object of the well known Novell of Justinian. The parochial Churches also were often largely endowed ; but the attempt to reserve the patronage of them did not succeed for a considerable period afterwards. It ultimately, no doubt, spread from the Voluntary Chapels to the proper Establishment Churches ; but so far from encouraging this violation of the Church's

privileges and independence, the effect of the Establishment was for a while at least to *resist the evil* originating solely and exclusively in the principle of Voluntaryism.

So much for the *origin* of the evil. Now as to its continued existence in Voluntary Churches. For my proof of this, I shall go to a field where we are assured these are to be found in their greatest purity and perfection, I mean the United States of America; and in regard to the orthodox Presbyterian Church of that country, I state, that, so far from the privilege of choosing pastors, conferred on the Church by her Great Head, being preserved unimpaired *in the Church herself*; in most congregations every pew-holder, and every stated worshipper who *contributes statedly to the support of the minister in his just proportion*, whether baptised or not, whether willing to submit to the exercise of discipline or not, whether of fair moral character or not, nay HOWEVER HETERODOX OR IMMORAL he may be, is *entitled to a voice in the election*.

These are not mere assertions of my own. I use the words of one who will be admitted by our opponents to be an authority decidedly partial to themselves, and most competent to bear witness on this point, I mean Dr Miller, Professor in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey, author of a Treatise on the "Warrant, Nature, and Duties of the office of the Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church," which has been recently republished in this country with a highly commenda-

tory Preface by the Reverend William Lindsay of the Relief Church, Glasgow. This author is a decided maintainer of the principles of our opponents. He states, (p. 2.) that "there can be no connection between the Church and the State;" that (p. 8.) "the moment the Church became allied with the State, that moment the influence of each on the other became manifestly mischievous;" and (p. 14.) "that all Civil Establishments of religion, in any form, and under any denomination, are wrong, contrary to the spirit of Christianity, injurious to the best interests of the Church, and really more to be deprecated by the enlightened friends of piety than the most sanguinary persecution that can be inflicted by the arm of power." Now, it is this thorough-going friend of the Voluntary principle, and of Voluntary Churches, who makes the statement I have referred to in regard to the choice of pastors in their congregations in America. His words, as to this matter, are, (p. 223.) "In that choice in MOST congregations, all PEW-HOLDERS, and all stated worshippers WHO ARE STATED CONTRIBUTORS TO THE SUPPORT OF THE PASTOR IN THEIR JUST PROPORTION, *whether* BAPTISED OR NOT, *whether* WILLING TO SUBMIT TO THE EXERCISE OF DISCIPLINE OR NOT, *and whether of* FAIR MORAL CHARACTER OR NOT, *are considered as* ENTITLED TO A VOTE;" and again, "Besides, every one, HOWEVER HETERODOX AND IMMORAL, may be a stated attendant on public worship, and every stated attendant on the worship of any Church, may be said to have an interest in the charac-

ter of the pastor, and a RIGHT, as far as may be, *to be pleased in the choice.*" Now, what is this system of allowing to every pew-holder, and every contributor to the support of the minister, whether a member of the Church or not, whether baptised or not, whether moral or immoral, whether orthodox or heterodox, a voice in the choice of the pastor, but a *sale for money* of the Christ-bought privileges and independence of the Church, constituting the very essence of patronage,—only more disgusting, because avowedly in the exercise of a *spiritual* function, not of a *civil* right, and because, instead of being imposed by the power of the State on a struggling and reclaiming Church, it is the free and voluntary act and deed of the Church herself, who of her own pleasure prefers this state of voluntary bondage to that freedom wherewith Christ hath made her free?

It is obvious, then, that the infringement of the privileges of the Church occasioned by patronage, is not peculiar to an Established Church, nor necessarily an attendant on it. I have shewn that the Church of Scotland subsisted as an Established Church, free from patronage; that this evil originated in Voluntary Churches, and is still rife among them; and having thus disposed of this part of my subject, I proceed to shew, that with the exception now considered, "the Church of Scotland *has* succeeded in preserving her just rights and privileges unimpaired by the conditions of her Civil Establishment."

On this branch of the subject, I had proposed, in

the first place, to have laid before you the statement of the Church herself, as to what her rights are, viewed in connection with the power of the State, and then to consider, by a review of her history and the civil enactments by which she is established, how far these have been impaired or preserved secure.

As to the Church's own statement, it was my wish to have read to you quotations from her Standards, and replied to an objection generally taken to certain expressions in the 23d chapter of the Confession of Faith, as to the power of the civil magistrate. I should, however, in this way have been forced to trespass too long upon your patience, and I, therefore, content myself with referring to the Standards themselves, and stating shortly the views which I consider the Church therein to maintain as to the respective bounds of Civil and Ecclesiastical power and jurisdiction.

According to her then, while the *spiritual* power of the Church, and the *civil* power of the State, have one origin and one end, being both of God, and tending, if rightly used, to advance his glory, and to have good and godly subjects, they are essentially diverse in their nature and in the means by which they operate, the one exclusively spiritual, the other exclusively civil. The spiritual power flowing immediately from Christ, he is the only Head of the Church, and no earthly prince or magistrate can assume authority over her, or interfere in her spiritual government; while, on the other hand, the Church may as little ex-

ercise the civil power. It is the duty of the magistrate to defend and support the Church, and of the Church to aid and counsel the State; but each in doing so, confining themselves to their own special province, and possessing an independent exercise of their respective powers and privileges, those of the Church being such as have been conferred on her in matters spiritual by her Great Head, and embracing the whole internal government of the Church, and those of the the State limited to matters civil.

The complete and absolute independence, and exclusive jurisdiction of the Church in matters spiritual under her sole and only Head, being declared by her in her Standards, we turn towards her history and the civil enactments establishing her, to see how far she has succeeded in maintaining them.

My limits will only permit me to give a very summary review of the general history of the Church in her contentings with the State. I would gladly have entered into some details as to the individual doings and sufferings of some of the noblest of her champions in this sacred cause ; but I must, of necessity, confine myself to the more general, though less vividly interesting course which I have mentioned.

In commencing, then, a short and general review of the long continued struggle which the Presbyterian Church of Scotland maintained for her independence, I must premise, that although *nominally* the contest often appeared to be solely between Presbytery and

Prelacy, it was *truly, and in substance*, between the supremacy of CHRIST and the supremacy of the KING. King James, who commenced the contest, took up the cause of Episcopacy, not so much from any approval in the abstract of that as the best or most scriptural form of Church government, but because it was only through the intervention of the bishops that he could ever hope to obtain the recognition of that supremacy which was, throughout, the unceasing object of all his efforts, and the dearest wish of his heart, filled, as it was, with the most besotted notions of his own supreme and irresponsible authority over all persons, and in all causes ; and it was exactly the same object, and the same desires that animated his infatuated descendants in carrying on the conflict. At his first assuming the reins of Government, King James evinced no outward hostility to the Presbyterian Church ; and, accordingly, in 1581, he joined with the people in subscribing the first national covenant, whereby “ this kingdom made a national surrender of themselves to the Lord, and bound and obliged themselves, and their posterity, to cleave to the truths of God and to the observance of his laws, ordinances, and institutions.” And here I wish particularly to observe what I shall have cause to notice again in the sequel, that on every occasion where, by taking and renewing the national covenant, *the principle of a national recognition of the Supreme Ruler as the Governor of Nations, and of the national duty of maintaining the worship of God and establishing his Church, were in the most*

emphatic possible way avowed and acted upon, there uniformly followed or accompanied it, a measure for securing or extending her liberty and independence. In the present instance, there was, at the same time, passed by Parliament, a "ratification of the liberty of the true kirk of God and religion," together with a confirmation of all the preceding acts in favour of the Church during the reign of Queen Mary and the King's minority, giving a promise of a continued support to the Presbyterian Church. The King, however, soon began to shew how ill he could brook the liberty and independence of the Church when all else was so submissive to his will ; and, accordingly, in 1584, in consequence of the declinature of his jurisdiction in matters alleged to be spiritual, by Andrew Melville and others of his brethren, who, when the nobles cowered beneath the frown of arbitrary power, boldly braved its loudest menace, a statute was passed, declaratory of the King's "royal power and authority over all estates, alsweil spiritual as temporal, within this realm ;" and "in all matters" wherein any of his subjects should be charged to answer before him. He further took some measures towards restoring the bishops, but the common danger to which the nation was shortly afterwards exposed by the invasion of the Spanish Armada, and the common gratitude for deliverance, produced a state of feeling which, with other circumstances, put a check to the further progress of the King's then attempt at supremacy over the Church ; and, in 1590, the National

Covenant was again renewed, and *again* was this recognition of the *national duty* in the support of religion followed by another “ratification of the true *liberty of the kirk*.” The very first act of the first Parliament held thereafter, was the act 1592, which recognised and ratified the government of the Church in Assemblies, Synods, and Presbyteries,—confirmed all her “liberties and privileges,”—rescinded all statutes “against the liberty of the true kirk, jurisdiction and discipline thereof, as the samin is used and exercised within this realm;” and with reference to the act 1584, declaratory of the King’s supremacy, this statute enacted, that it should “na wayes be prejudicial, nor derogate ony thing to the privilege that God hes given to the spiritual office-bearers in the kirk concerning heads of religion, matters of heresy, excommunication, collation or deprivation of ministers, or ony siklike essential censures, specialle grounded and havand warrand of the word of God.”

By this act, the State, at one and the same time, recognised the liberty and independence of the Church, except in so far as regarded the matter of patronage to which I have already adverted, and secured her in those civil rights and privileges which were necessary to the effectual accomplishment of her great object,—the religious instruction of the people. The King, however, had not abandoned his project of establishing his own supremacy over the Church, and additional means were soon afforded him of accomplishing it by his accession of power in succeeding to the throne of

England. Proceedings were again renewed against the ministers who resisted his encroachments, and who contended for the independence of the Church. Some were banished, others imprisoned ; and by threats and oppression on the one hand, and inducements of a different description on the other, he ultimately succeeded in establishing a system of modified Episcopacy, and in obtaining from a recreant Assembly at Glasgow, in 1610, an acknowledgment of his supremacy in matters spiritual, which was afterwards ratified in Parliament. His son, Charles I., with the same high notions of kingly authority, carried them still more fully into practical operation. The nobles and the people bent submissive to his tyranny in matters civil ; but at last, when he ventured to press too far his usurped supremacy over the Church, he roused a spirit which he could not quell, and raised that tempest which finally swept him from his throne. Then began the second Reformation of our Church, and *as upon every other establishment, or restoration of the Church's independence, it was preceded by a recognition of the nation's duty as to the Church's support.* In February 1638, the National Covenant was renewed by all ranks, and in the November following, sat that memorable Assembly, which restored the purity, and reasserted the independence of the Church of Scotland. The King's Commissioner, by the royal authority, dissolved the Assembly. The Assembly appealed to their allegiance to a Higher Sovereign, defied his power, and proceeded to carry into effect the

everbinding commands of their Heavenly Master. They abolished Episcopacy, and the recent innovations, and re-established Presbyterian Government, which was shortly afterwards ratified in Parliament. Thereafter, the Solemn League was entered into for the maintenance and advancement of the true religion, and uniformity of worship in the three kingdoms. This was solemnly renewed in 1648, and the *very next year* after this concluding national renewal of the League and Covenant for the support of the Church, the last fetter which shackled her independence was struck off, by the act for the abolition of Patronage. Thus, at the *very moment* when the principle of the national obligation to support and advance the Church by national means, and even by national treaties, was most triumphant, the independence of the Church was most perfect and complete; and it is not unimportant to observe, that this same act, abolishing patronage, is *expressly rested on the obligation incumbent on the nation* to promote the interest and maintain the liberties of the Church, proceeding, as it does, upon the preamble of, "The estates of Parliament being sensible of the great obligation that lays upon them by the National Covenant, and by the solemn League and Covenant, and by many deliverances and mercies from God, and by the late solemn engagement unto duties, to preserve the doctrine, and maintain and vindicate the liberties of the Kirk of Scotland, and to advance the work of Reformation to the utmost of their power."

This period of the joint triumph of the principle of a national religion, and of the perfect liberty of the Church, has been looked back to with longing and admiring eyes, by the friends of the Church of Scotland in every succeeding generation ; but if our opponents be right, this, the *brightest page in her history*, must be *branded* with the *blackest mark of condemnation*, as shewing forth, *in its closest union*, that connection which they denounce as unscriptural and unchristian. *Our* only complaint regarding it, however, is, that it was too short and fleeting. At the Restoration, all the bulwarks which had been erected around our Zion were swept away by the infamous act Rescissory, and the King's supremacy once more became ascendant. This was still the *real* subject of contest, and accordingly the excellent and godly martyr, Guthrie, was condemned and executed for respectfully declining his Majesty's authority in matters spiritual. This supremacy was again recognised in Parliament by the Act 1669, which declared, " That his Majesty hath the supreme authority and supremacy over all persons, and in all causes ecclesiastical, within his kingdom ; and that by virtue thereof, the ordering and disposal of the external government and policy of the Church doth properly belong to his Majesty and his successors as an inherent right to the Crown ; and that his Majesty and his successors may settle, enact, and emit such constitutions, acts, and orders concerning the administration of the external government of the Church and the persons employed in the same, and concerning all

ecclesiastical meetings and matters to be proposed and determined therein, as they in their Royal wisdom shall think fit."

During the whole of the period of cruel oppression, between the Restoration and the Revolution, when the persecutors ploughed so deep their furrows along the back of the Church, this question of the King's supremacy held a prominent place in the contest; and after some time, would the Church but have yielded this point, and accepted as a concession from the King's authority, that which they claimed as the inalienable and inherent right of the Church, they might have retained the enjoyment of much of their possessions, and escaped much of their miseries. They boldly, however, contended for the *absolute* spiritual independence of the Church, while they, at the same time, with equal boldness and firmness, maintained the *obligation* which lay on them *as a nation*, in their *national* capacity, to *advance the cause of true religion* agreeably to their Solemn Covenant, whereby they had devoted themselves *nationally* to the service of God; and we observe throughout this noble struggle, that they who most strenuously testified for the *one* principle, did most strenuously testify for the *other*. They were subjected to the most cruel and oppressive laws to enforce compliance with the ecclesiastical government and form of worship introduced by the King's mere authority. They were made liable not only for their own non-conformity, but for that of their wives, their children, their servants, and their tenants;—they were subjected to the

imposition of vain and blasphemous oaths at the will of a licentious soldiery;—they were made subject to death for meeting in the fields to worship God after the manner of their Fathers, or even assembling in a house for the same pious purpose, if the number present should be so great as that some should be outside the door;—a father, a child, or a wife, was made liable to be doomed to death for affording the succours of common humanity to a son, a parent, or a husband, who had offended against those atrocious laws, —THEY MAINTAINED THEIR TESTIMONY. They were delivered over to imprisonment and torture; old men and tender maidens were subjected to the same cruel agonies—an unbridled and savage soldiery was let loose upon the land—they were expelled from their homes, and driven to the moor and to the mountain to seek for refuge in the dens and caves of the earth—THEY CLUNG TO THEIR RIGHTEOUS CAUSE. They were forced to arms in self-defence, but the standard round which they rallied bore on one side the LIBERTY OF THE CHURCH, it bore on the other, the OBLIGATION OF THE COVENANT; and even with those who renounced their allegiance to the tyrant, the head and front of his offending was the violation of HIS OWN ALLEGIANCE TO THE KING OF KINGS, *in endeavouring to overturn that Church, which, AS A RULER, he had covenanted to maintain.* They were defeated, and made captive—they were driven into the city where we now are, like beasts to the shambles, and crowded into her dungeons, thence to witness from time to time,

paraded through the streets, the ghastly spear-fixed head of a fallen or murdered companion, with the severed hands raised before it, in cruel mocking in the attitude of prayer, and so brought close to the gratings of their prison-house to agonize the heart of a father, a son, or a brother, or a friend with whom he had taken sweet counsel together—THEY KEPT THEIR FAITH. They were dragged to the scaffold—they sealed their testimony with their blood, and *that* testimony, *and let it never be forgotten*, was a testimony alike for the *covenanted obligation of nationally maintaining the Church of Christ as for his sole and absolute headship over her*. COVENANTERS they *lived*,—COVENANTERS they *died*; and in living and in dying, they shewed forth the harmony, and, in their view, the *indissoluble union* between the NATIONAL DUTY of *establishing the Church, and the duty of defending her in that FREEDOM wherewith Christ had made her free*—THE VERY PRINCIPLES FOR WHICH WE NOW CONTEND.

After a long dark night of persecution, the dawn arose when King William and Queen Mary were called to the throne of these realms, at the glorious Revolution,—in nothing *more* glorious than in *this*, that it established the true Protestant religion as the only recognised religion of the nation, and with us in Scotland restored the Presbyterian Church to that freedom for which her sons had so nobly, so perseveringly struggled. Among the grievances presented by the States to be redressed in Parliament, one of the most

prominent was the act 1669, formerly quoted, asserting the King's supremacy in matters ecclesiastical, which they desired to be abolished ; and the very first act of the Parliament 1690, was one annulling and rescinding this statute, which was declared "in the whole heads, articles, and clauses thereof, to be of no force or effect in all time coming." By this act, the independence of the Church, and the sole supremacy of her Divine Head, was substantially recognised ; and by the fifth act of the same Parliament, she was once more established in all the rights and privileges which she had enjoyed under the act 1592.

On the footing on which she was then placed the Church still stands, recognised, fortified, and supported by the State, but, (with the solitary exception as to patronage) enjoying fully and freely all her spiritual jurisdiction and privileges ; the State and the Church thus uniting and aiding each other in promoting the joint end of both Civil and Ecclesiastical Government, the glory of God and the good of the people ; but each acting in its own proper sphere, the *State* not interfering in matters of *spiritual*, nor the *Church* in matters of *civil* jurisdiction. It is this union *without* commixtion, which is fitted to make the Church most effective for good ; but our opponents, in talking of the union between Church and State, always seem to refer to an union *by* commixtion, which *we* reprobate as decidedly as *they*. It is to that sort of union alone,—union *by* commixtion,—that their favourite simile of fire and water applies ; and no doubt to *such* an union it is

perfectly appropriate. The fire will dissipate the water, or the water will extinguish the fire : the State will drive off religion from the Church, or the Church will overwhelm the civil power of the State. But if we confine each element to its proper sphere, *we* also shall have an apt emblem of an union such as *we* advocate,—such as *we* enjoy. The fire, confined within its own retainers, and the water in its own vessel, but in close union with each other,—the heat of the one element acting on the other produces a power the most efficient for good which the skill of man has devised ; and in like manner the Church, retained in her proper place, but drawing support from the State confined to *its* proper bounds, but yet in close alliance, is capable of exerting a power as all-efficient in the *moral* world as the other in the *physical* world,—a power which no ignorance can resist, no vice counter-match, and which over the most degraded population can spread light, and happiness, and virtue, changing the very face of society, and making the howling wilderness a garden of Eden.

It is, however, objected, that the presence of the representative of the supreme civil magistrate in our General Assemblies, imports a certain degree of *commixtion*, or of interference with our Ecclesiastical Government. But as the King's Commissioner has no voice there, his presence is truly nothing more than a mark of honour paid by the civil power to the Church, justly prized by her, and a visible emblem or sign of that union which actually subsists. At the same time

being only an emblem, it can import nothing which does not belong to the reality, and of course can infer no interference which the terms of the union itself do not recognise. Further, it is said, that at least the form of the King's Commissioner dissolving the Assembly and fixing the next diet, is an act of positive interference with her rights as an independent Church. Now, it is true that the King assumes this power. The Church, however, in her Standards, disavows his right to it, and claims it to herself, and she invariably exercises it, first, of her *own authority* making that appointment, which the King's Commissioner repeats. Nay, when in 1638 the King attempted to dissolve the Assembly under circumstances which called on them to assert their own just rights, we have seen that they defied his power, and continued their sittings in opposition to his will; and although subsequent to the Revolution some weakness and wavering was shewn as to this matter, I feel confident, that should the time ever come when a government shall arise so inimical to the Church as to attempt to silence or dissolve her Assemblies, we shall shew that we can dare, and do, and suffer like our Fathers; and as we have succeeded in hitherto preserving our just rights and privileges, we shall, by the blessing of God, succeed in maintaining them to the end.

Finally, it is alleged that the civil magistrate, in the very act of chusing the religious creed which he should establish, has encroached upon the proper province of the Church. This assertion, however, proceeds from

confounding two things in their own nature essentially different, namely, the judgment exercised within the Church by her office-bearers in their due explication of their proper spiritual jurisdiction, and that *discretive* judgment by which every individual and nation determines on their profession of religion. This discretive judgment, it is not only the *province* but the *duty* of every man to exercise for himself. When it is exercised by an individual, as an individual, or in his character of head of a family, no right of the Church is invaded, and as little can such be invaded by the exercise of it by a nation through their legitimate organs—those invested with the legislative government, the State only approving and adopting that on which the Church has already determined. Driven from this point, our opponents say that the magistrate has no sufficient means of distinguishing between the true and the false religion. But the same means are vouchsafed to nations as to individuals. God has given a revelation sufficiently clear that all men *may* know his will, and whether they act individually or nationally, as subjects or as rulers, they are equally bound to receive and obey it, and the plea that they have not the means of determining between the true and the false, is as inadmissible from a nation as from an individual. When Pontius Pilate was about to withdraw the support and protection of the law from the Lord of light and life, and deliver him over to an infuriated rabble, he, in reply to the appeal that the Saviour came into the world to bear witness to the *truth*, asked—not as an

humble inquirer, but with the spirit of a sceptic, "*What is truth?*" And now that our rulers are wished to withdraw from *His Church* the support of the law, they are prompted to ask with the same spirit of scepticism and doubt, "*What is truth?*" But as the *Roman* governor *in vain* washed his hands and declared himself guiltless of the blood of our Lord, so *in vain* would governors *thus acting in the present day* as to *His Church*, seek to free themselves of responsibility, even although their advisers, like the Jews of old, should invoke it to fall on *them* and on their children. Should they thus act, which Heaven avert, so that there shall be no more recognition of God in the councils, the assemblies, and the laws of this nation, and that the voice of national praise and of national prayer shall be no more heard at all in her, deeply indeed will they have to answer for the national judgments which may be expected as the just reward of such ungrateful rebellion in return for so many and such long continued mercies. In vain shall they appeal to their inability to distinguish the truth. They may have wilfully blinded themselves, or the god of this world may have blinded them; still, altogether independent of their regarding or not regarding, *truth* exists, and its light in this land is shining upon all. When the starry Galileo, after his sublime discovery of the motion of this globe and the other planets round the sun, worn out by imprisonment and enfeebled by age, consented to disclaim it, as he rose from his knees after making his sad recantation, he

struck the earth with his foot, exclaiming “ YET IT “ MOVES ! ”—Despots may condemn,—weak man may deny—still it holds on its ceaseless course—“ YET IT “ MOVES ! ” And although man may, in his presumption or his folly, shut his eyes to the light, YET TRUTH IS—ever beaming, bright and glorious, from the throne of the Eternal, shedding life, and peace, and joy on all who in faith and humility receive it, and scathing and scorching such as reject the testimony which God has given.

THE END.

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LECTURE X.

EXCELLENCE OF THE PAROCHIAL ECONOMY OF SCOTLAND.

THE subject of Lecture this evening is,—“The Original Excellence of the Parochial Economy, and its fitness to promote the ends of a Scriptural Union between the Church and the State.” Brief as the announcement may be, it embraces a vast field of thought and enquiry, and when I inform you that it is only recently that I was prevailed upon to undertake this Lecture, and that it has been written amid all the interruption to which a minister’s time is exposed in Glasgow, I am sure that I have said enough to secure your indulgence for the many imperfections which I am well aware cleave to the following observations.

It is scarcely necessary to state the precise position at which we have arrived in this Course of Lectures. The great question of the union between Church and

State,—the lawfulness, the duty, the advantages, of such an alliance, have all been discussed,—we have now come to an application of the principle which has been established—to the particular case of the Church of Scotland. What the nature of the union of the Church and State is as it exists in Scotland, together with subsidiary questions, has been explained by the learned gentleman who immediately preceded me, and now I have been requested to show the original excellence of the Parochial Economy, and its fitness to promote the ends of a scriptural union between the Church and the State.

It is useful to bear in mind at what particular point we have arrived in the discussion, not only to prevent disappointment and disarm the charge that we take for granted matters which we should have proved, but also, in the present case, to guard the great abstract scriptural principles of Church Establishments from being injured by their particular application in Scotland. It is quite a possible thing that while the principles of Church Establishments are sound and good, their application in a given country may be erroneous. The constitution of the Church of Scotland might have been so Erastian, her parochial economy so inquisitorial, that her cause might have been indefensible, but it would have been very unfair, on this account, to have disparaged the great general question of Church Establishments, and to have concluded that they were unscriptural, and that it was impossible there could be any suitable union between Church and State. Hence

it is important to separate between principles, and the application of principles,—the one may stand while the other must be abandoned. Instead, however, of there being anything wrong in the application of the Church Establishment principle in Scotland, my object is to prove that her original parochial economy is most excellent, and that therefore, in her case, the general principles of Church Establishments, and their particular application, are harmonious, and the grand ends of a scriptural union between the Church and the State secured.

The true design of a union between Church and State is not, as many imagine, to enrich the clergy, or to raise up an instrument of political power, or to oppress those who differ in sentiment from the dominant party. Church Establishments, like all other good things, may have been abused to such purposes, but these are not their legitimate uses, and it is not till they have been grossly perverted from their right uses that they are capable of such applications. The grand design of a union between Church and State, apart from which it is not worth the trouble of a controversy, is publicly to recognise the revealed truth of God, and provide means that the whole body of the people, even the poorest, shall have the gospel brought near to them, and pressed upon their acceptance, so that by receiving it, they may become at once good members of the Church, and of the Commonwealth. Now, I say, that the parochial economy of Scotland, in its original condition, was designed and fitted to attain such ends as

these, and can any man doubt this who knows what the parochial economy really was. A great many well-disposed persons know little more about the history of the Church of Scotland, than the amazing persecutions which were endured by her people, and they cannot know too much about these ; but did they study the other parts of her history, they would discover much which was scarcely less admirable, and which, indeed, was the very root and source of that moral heroism which enabled the Christians of Scotland to stand the fires of persecution so nobly.

For an account of the parochial system of Scotland, we must appeal to accredited documents, and these are the First and Second Books of Discipline, the one drawn up by Knox and his coadjutors in 1560, the other prepared eighteen years later. And here I cannot deny myself the pleasure of testifying, that considering the age in which these books were written, nearly 300 years ago, we shall look in vain for any thing in modern times which, for a true knowledge of human nature, vigorous common sense, enlightened views of the objects of education and government, genuine regard for the moral and religious welfare of the nation, can be compared with the public documents of the Fathers of the First Reformation. Not only were they men of superior natural endowments, but considering what an important influence they were destined to exert upon Christianity in this country through succeeding ages, they seem to have been enriched with the special guidance and blessing of God.

Whatever was the origin of parishes, which is involved in some obscurity, the founders of the Church of Scotland determined, that as soon as pastors could be supplied, a minister should be planted in every parish. There were 940 such parishes in Scotland at the period of the Reformation,—nearly as many as exist at the present day. Discarding the corruptions of Popery, they decreed that the minister should be appointed by the Christian people, or at least that they should have an effectual controul over his nomination; and discarding another fiction of the Romish Church, by which it is held that the clergy alone are the Church, they renewed the order of primitive days, and associated laymen with ministers in the government of the Church and the diffusion of Christian knowledge, under the name of Ruling Elders. Next they decreed, that there should be a school in every parish,—that every child, even the poorest, should be taught, and *that* not in the slight and superficial way which some imagine is the only way in which religious men will ever educate a country, but with a fullness, and for a length of time, which embraced the chief parts of knowledge cultivated at the period. Then they appointed deacons to take charge of the affairs of the poor, and, from the Church property which they could collect, to provide for their subsistence and that of the schools and the ministry. So anxious were the Reformers immediately to overspread Scotland with the means of temporal and spiritual good, that they did not wait for a supply of labourers in the natural course of things, but created two

officers to meet the temporary exigencies of the times, —Superintendents to travel over the country and plant Churches, and Scripture-Readers to discharge, so far as they could, the duties of ministers and schoolmasters, where these could not be procured.

Such was the original parochial economy of Scotland, and can any thing be conceived more excellent or effective? The population was not too great for the machinery when brought into full operation. Ministers assisted by a staff of faithful elders, laboured each in his separate locality ;—the whole body of the youth were taught ;—the schoolmasters instructed, the ministers and elders superintended, deacons provided for the wants of the poor ;—the labours of every department were hallowed by the influence of Christian motives and directed to Christian ends, and the nature of the Church Government was not only essentially popular, but supplied a check against remissness, and kept the whole system alive and energetic. Thus, the young, the grown up, the offenders against morals, the rich, the poor, the aged, every class in the country were carefully provided for ; and what can be conceived more likely to refine and Christianize society?

But to be a little more particular, men of all ranks were brought into contact with religion, and that in the most effective and permanent form. The pastor was not discouraged and oppressed by an unmanageable field. He was appointed to a work which he could overtake. He could see the fruit of his labours. He was made responsible, and he felt responsible for

the Christian cultivation of his manageable vineyard. He preached faithfully and frequently on the Sabbath. He visited regularly, and catechised on the week days, bringing out the children to school where they were in danger of neglecting its instructions, meeting the cases of the poor, informing the ignorant, counselling the perplexed, consoling the afflicted, the bereaved, and the dying. Familiarly acquainted with the people, he was at once recognised as their father and friend as well as their minister, and all his counsels and intercourse on the week day deepened and confirmed the sacred lessons of the Sabbath.

His footsteps had scarcely left the cottage before the good elders appeared, and each in his still smaller locality, laboured to promote the same grand ends. The eldership was numerous. It comprehended the most respectable men for character and station in the parish. Each had the charge of a small number of families, which he was constantly visiting and taking account of their temporal and spiritual welfare. He reiterated the lessons of the pastor,—he inquired after the progress of the children at school,—he entered the chambers of the sick, and prayed with them,—the erring and the guilty he seriously admonished,—none were neglected,—the whole country was laid under moral police, and every elder felt responsible for the condition of his district.

Then came the active and sympathising deacon in search of the poor and the destitute. He carried alms with him,—not the cold-hearted extorted alms of a

poors' rate, for there was no need for poors' rates under such a glorious system of Christian means, but the offerings of serious and tender-hearted and holy men to their afflicted brethren. The good deacon mingled pious counsels with his gifts, and told the minister or the elder of the case of sorrow, and, if unacquainted with it before, they hastened to the poor man's house, and set on foot some plan for his permanent relief, and ministered at the same time the consolations of religion.

Close by the parish church rose the parish school,—part of the same system and under the same management. The one teaching religion to children, the other teaching religion to adults. If the one be unsound in principle, the other is unsound in principle also. If the one must be destroyed, the other cannot be spared. When parents were so well instructed and catechised, it seems almost unnecessary, specially and publicly, to provide for the education of their children; but the founders of the Scottish Church had come fresh from Popery, and knew something of its power, and were aware also, that the safety of their system and of Christianity could not be secured without the enlarged instruction of the school as well as the private training of the parental roof, and so they set up their parochial schools,—and to these schools all ranks repaired, the son of the heritor and the son of the peasant, and the kirk-session sent the orphan and the children of the poor, and none were allowed to grow up untaught. Catechisms to facilitate the communication of know-

ledge were prepared or approved by the Church, such as Calvin's; and any one who will examine these Catechisms, will see how serious and thorough was the education of those days. Human literature was not neglected at the parish school, and still less so in the other parts of the same noble system. In every notable town it was contemplated there should be a grammar school. There were also to be several universities, and the regular course in both was sufficient to occupy the labours of years. According to the First Book of Discipline, a young man must have spent his time up to the age of 24, in the acquisition of knowledge before he was accounted able to be of service to the Church or the State.

Such was the parochial economy of Scotland, and what can be conceived more perfect; every human being in a parish, whatever his age or character or circumstances, was brought under moral and religious influences, and this was maintained throughout the course of his life, and in the most interesting and impressive manner. None were overlooked or excluded from the operation of these influences. All the duties of the great relationships of nature,—of parents, masters, and magistrates,—were sanctified and carefully exercised. There was, therefore, a beautiful blending and sympathy among the different ranks of society, and every parish became like a large religious family, of which the pastor was the parent and the head. We cannot imagine any thing more perfect. There is nothing defective or wanting in the parochial

system :—How can we improve it? One of the best proofs of its perfection is to be found in the fact, that *now* that serious and reflecting men are awake to the moral and religious destitution of multitudes in our land, and are devising schemes to meet and to remedy it, they are not getting beyond the ancient parochial system. They cannot exceed it. They are often—unknown to themselves—only reviving another and another part of its obsolete and forgotten glory. Christians in the nineteenth century find that they cannot in spiritual wisdom and resources surpass the Christians of the sixteenth. The more a false or erroneous system is examined and explored up to first principles, the more unsound and unworthy does it appear; but it is otherwise with the parochial system of Scotland; the more it is examined in its primary elements and operations, the more are its beauty and strength and perfection evolved, and the more are we struck with wonder at the Christian wisdom and far-seeing penetration of its founders.

Suppose, instead of this division of a country into parishes, this establishment of a minister in every parish, this planting of schools, this creation of an eldership and a deaconship for every thousand or less of the population, that the Reformers had gone forth to the Christianization of Scotland, collecting a congregation where they could find one able and willing to support them—without any feeling of responsibility for the cultivation of a particular and assigned district, and with elders and deacons equally insensible to

that responsibility ;—suppose they had planted schools only where they found parents and children so impressed with the importance of education that they were willing, and at the same time able, to uphold them, and that they had dealt with grammar schools and colleges in a similar manner, who can doubt, however excellent and praiseworthy the men might be, that owing to the want of system, or rather the essential weakness of their system, the Church and the schools, and so the minister and elders and teachers and deacons, would all have been far fewer in number, and multitudes of the people, especially of the poor, from the want of will on the one hand, and the want of money on the other, would never have been reached by the instruments of literary, moral, and religious amelioration ? Missions might have been established, and for a season sustained by foreign aid ; but this could only have been for a time. They cannot be reckoned upon as a permanent source of spiritual provision ; and even at the best, they are far too weak, from the want of pecuniary resources, to descend to the very depths of society, and provide fully and adequately for the whole mass of the population.

Warmly as I have spoken of the perfection of the ancient parochial system of Scotland, I do not mean of course to affirm, that in practical working, it was always and in every case what I have described ; or that even where most perfectly administered, it could, by its own inherent strength, accomplish the great moral and religious results at which it aimed. As a

system, I believe the old parochial economy of Scotland to have been perfect. At least I can see no defects, and with the exception, perhaps, of Infant School training, which is only an extension of its principles, I have never been able to meet with the man who could point out to me any substantial improvements; but, so far as practical working is concerned, no doubt the weakness and imperfections of human nature would occasionally appear. This would not have been a fallen world were it otherwise. Under the best system, even under the systems of those who are most opposed to the parochial economy of Scotland, error and weakness and sin will ever manifest themselves; but the tendency of a perfect system is to check and correct these. And perfect as I account the parochial system of Scotland, I am far from imagining that it or any system can change the heart. It is common for some to cry out against forms and institutions and systems, and to ask, if we imagine that religion lies in them, —I answer No; and those do a great injustice to the Reformers, who suppose or say, that they were chargeable with so gross a heresy. The founders of the Scottish Establishment were as deeply persuaded as any Christian among us can be, that it is only divine influence which can regenerate and sanctify the soul.— Often did they impress this truth upon their hearers, and guard them against trusting to means or forms,— and it would be well if some, who in this matter, speak lightly of the Reformers, possessed one-half of their spirituality of mind; but they knew also, that God's

blessing can be expected only in the use of means, and that from the most perfect adaptation of means to such ends, the most perfect, moral and religious result is to be looked for ; and little do the persons who indulge in such reflections seem to remember, that they themselves really employ, and are as truly dependent for any good which they are honoured to effect on the use of means as we are ; and that the only difference between us and them, is that their means are neither so extensive, nor so well suited to the end as ours, and that hence they are not equally successful.

Did any part of the parochial economy of Scotland run-counter to the word of God, that would alter the character of the objection. But can any allege that such is the case ? Will any contend that it is contrary to the revealed mind of God, to divide a country into districts, and to attach to ministers and elders particular spheres of labour in these districts ? No : this is a matter in which Christian men are left to judge for themselves in what way they can make their Christian influence tell most effectually upon others. The parochial economy of olden times is neither more nor less than the great principle of modern times, the subdivision of labour applied to spiritual things. It is the very principle on which Dissenters themselves act in every case where they set up a Local Sabbath School, or a City Mission Station. And though it is not necessary to appeal to scripture, and indeed it is not to be expected that scripture should throw any light upon the subject, yet I have little doubt,

that the Jewish synagogues were parochial, and that the Levites who were scattered over the country, were parochial ministers—at least, it will be difficult for our opponents to prove the reverse, and as the synagogue service was not like the temple service, transitory—but permanent in its objects and ends, and as our blessed Lord gave his sanction to this service, by regularly waiting upon it, during the whole course of his life, so we seem entitled to contend, not only that the principles of the Jewish Church Establishment warrant the principles of a Church Establishment among us, but also, that the parochial economy of the Jewish synagogue, reflects light and approbation upon the parochial economy of our country.

But however excellent the original parochial system of Scotland may seem in itself,—however impossible to conceive of any thing more complete or comprehensive,—we are not limited to this kind of argument in its behalf. Some things look well in theory, and Voluntaryism is one of them, which work very feebly and injuriously in practice. Does the parochial system of Scotland belong to this number? Can we only appeal to a noble theory? Does its perfection fail when we attempt to realize it? Far from it. The old Scottish parochial economy is as wonderful in practical operation as it is exquisite in theoretical beauty. I have been requested to shew its original excellence and fitness to promote the great ends of a union between Church and State; and how can I better establish these points than by shewing that its practical

working civilized and christianized Scotland? Surely the making of men Christians is the best of all proofs that the system which does so is excellent, and that it has accomplished the grand design of a civil establishment of religion. If this is not a proof of excellence and adaptation, I know not what is. And here I must confess the testimonies to the beneficial operation of the parochial system among the people of Scotland are so numerous that I am at a loss which to choose. The difficulty lies in selection. As the parochial system was all-pervading, so its fruit appears not in one but in every quarter and department of trial to which we turn. I can only select a few of the more prominent testimonies, and especially those which are less generally known. For the more common proofs I refer to the ordinary histories of the Church of Scotland.

We may begin with a great, and notorious, and comprehensive fact. I am chargeable with no national pride,—no undue disparagement of others,—when I say that Scotland has been distinguished among modern nations for the industry, and intelligence, and enterprise, and high moral and religious character of her people. There can be no doubt about this,—the fact is universally admitted. Nations know and acknowledge it;—the four quarters of the world confess it. At home, the attainments of Scotchmen in the commonwealth of letters,—their standing in the army and navy,—their appearance in the witness and the jury box, in a court of law,—their almost universal dispersion and success in other countries,—their fame

in foreign lands,—the very passport to respect which the name of their country often procures for them,—these, and a thousand other circumstances, all shew the superiority of their national character. Nay, the difficulty which is experienced in convincing many in the South, *now* that the population of Scotland has outrun the means of her intellectual and moral cultivation that there is any thing seriously amiss in her condition, just serves to prove how high is the estimate which had been previously entertained of her character. And how did this character originate? To what can the intellectual and moral glory of Scotland be ascribed? National character is not formed at random or in a day. There must be powerful and continually operating causes at work. Natural temperament, political institutions, physical advantages, outward prosperity, cannot explain the facts. Some of these are adverse instead of being beneficial, and others are shared by nations which have given no evidence of possessing the same qualifications of character. What then can explain the high national character of Scotland? Nothing can explain it but her parochial system,—her literary, and moral, and religious institutions; and these amply and satisfactorily account for the whole; and is it no honour to the parochial economy to have formed a character whose fame is throughout the world, and which has been transmitted from generation to generation? Is it no evidence of original excellence and scriptural adaptation in an instrument, when it can boast of such glorious achievements?

But the beneficial operation of the parochial economy of Scotland will be more manifest if we attend to its fruits a little in detail. You will remember that the year 1560 was the year of the Reformation,—the year in which the parochial system might be said to begin. Previous to this period, though the Protestant doctrines had made considerable progress, Scotland was a Popish nation, and not only so, intensely Popish. More than half the property of the country was in the hands of the church of Rome. Situated at a distance from the seat of Papal empire, and unfamiliarized to the nakedness and deformity of its rule, the people of Scotland in those days, like the people of Ireland at the present day, were the most devoted adherents of the Popish system. They looked with mysterious awe and veneration to Rome. Education, except a little Latin for the priests and eldest sons of the nobility, was unknown. Nay, so lately as twenty years before the Reformation, it was death by fire to read the Scriptures. Hence the body of the people were more ignorant than words can describe.

And what was the state of matters twenty years after the Reformation? What did the parochial system accomplish in twenty years? You would be ready to think, considering the small number of ministers, their poverty, and the civil distractions of the country, that little or nothing would by this time be gained. But widely different was the case. Such is the power of the parochial system, that in less than twenty years from the period of its establishment, and a partial

establishment too, we find it recorded in the dedication of the first edition of the Scriptures, addressed to King James, that almost every family had a Bible, and was able to read it;* and the General Assembly, about the same period, abolished the temporary office of Scripture-Reader or Exhorter, as being only suited for times of ignorance, and no longer needed.

Twenty years later, or forty years from the Reformation, we have it on the testimony of Calderwood, that the congregation of Mr Black, minister of St. Andrews, contained more than 3000 communicants, among whom, says he, “you would meet neither with a beggar nor a Sabbath-breaker.”† At the same period, kirk-sessions were so zealous in promoting the cause of universal Scriptural education, that they not only sent poor children to school, but made the education of children one of the conditions of charity, and refused parish aid to the parents who failed to send their children to school.‡ A few years later, in 1606, Commissioners were appointed by the General Assembly to visit the Highlands and Islands, in order to erect new parishes; and not less than ten such,—whole presbytery, was formed in the Western Islands.§

But I need not enlarge on the vast moral change which, in a brief space of time, was wrought over a

* Appendix to M'Crie's Life of Melville, Vol. I., p. 466.

† Altare Damasc, p. 751.

‡ Appendix to M'Crie's Life of Melville, Vol. II., p. 496 to 499. § Altare Damasc.

large part of Scotland by her parochial system. I shall close this period by quoting the words of the Act and Testimony of the first Seceders—a document of unquestionable authority. Speaking of the first Reformation, they say—“ At this time the Lord was known in a remarkable manner in the Assemblies and in the dwelling-places of our Zion, and upon all the glory there was a defence. The doctrine being sound and lively—the worship pure and spiritual—the discipline powerful and impartial, the government was beautiful as Tirzah, and comely as Jerusalem, for order and unity ; and all was accompanied with the rich breathings and influences of the spirit of the Lord, so that at this period the Church of Scotland was spoken of among foreigners as one of the brightest candlesticks among the churches of Christ.” *

Leaving the first great triumph of the original parochial economy of Scotland, we now pass on to the *second*. Its successful working was not accidental, it was under the divine blessing the natural fruit of the system, and so, after an interruption from Episcopacy, it resumed its power, and presented the same results anew in still greater glory. Even under the withering reign of Episcopacy, the parochial system, so far as it was unimpaired, gave evidence of its excellence and the moral impulse which it had communicated, and which in spite of every disadvantage it in some measure maintained, prepared a way for the overthrow of the yoke which had been imposed.

* Testimony, p. 30.

The period of which I now speak, stretches from 1638 to 1660, a period of twenty-two years, when Presbytery gained the ascendancy, and the parochial system was fully restored. Every one who studies this period of history, and compares it with the immediately preceding, and more especially with the days of Popery, must be struck with the mighty change. The acts of Assembly during this period, and more especially the first part of it, are full of enactments for planting Churches and Schools, and visiting and improving Colleges. There are a greater number of acts of Assembly on the subject of universal Scriptural education in the first eleven years after Presbytery was restored, than in the whole previous periods of the history of the Church of Scotland.*

So much was accomplished in the Lowlands, that as far as the provision of means went, little needed to be done, and so in the true spirit of a Missionary Church, the Church of our fathers turned with all her zeal and vigour to the destitute Highlands and Islands. Her exertions on this field were great, and they were as wise as they were great. The parish School went up with the parish Church, and the poor Highlanders were taught the truths of Scripture, not in a foreign but in their own much-loved language. It had been well for the Protestant Church of Ireland had she been half as wise. As a proof of the missionary labours of the Church in behalf of the Highlands, it may be mentioned, that the acts of Assembly of 1648 bear, that the Assembly

* *Vide* Acts of Assembly from 1638 to 1649.

applied to the province of Argyle to name young men having the Gaelic language, in order to send them to the grammar schools, and called upon Presbyteries and Synods, after they had entered College, to provide bursaries for them—and that there were not less than forty such young men in regular training for the Highlands at the same time, and supported too by annual contributions from the parishes of Scotland.

I might shew from the history of this period, and the exertions which were made, and successfully made, to enlarge the literature of the grammar-schools and colleges, how ignorant is the notion that religious men care only for religious knowledge, and have no taste for literature; and that if they had popular education in their hands, they would stint and starve the people. I might shew that it was when religion flourished most, that true zeal for literature flourished best, and that the faithful ministers of the Church of Scotland made greater sacrifices for literature and knowledge at this period, than multitudes of those who talk loudest upon the subject in modern times. It will ever be found, that true religion carries all other true blessings in its train.

But I must hasten to speak of the moral and religious *results* of the parochial system in this second period of Presbytery—and though the testimony has often been quoted before, yet it is so comprehensive and delightful, that I cannot refrain from quoting it again.—I am sure that you will not weary of it, at least I never grow tired of it myself.

Speaking of the year 1649, Kirkton, the historian,

who was a minister first in the south, and then in this city, and who lived in those days, says, "Now the ministry was notably purified, the magistrates altered, and the people strangely refined; Scotland hath even, by emulous foreigners, been called Philadelphia, and now she seemed to be in her flower." And then describing the state of things at a later day, in 1660, he says, "At the King's return every parish had a minister—every village had a school—every family almost had a Bible; yea, in most of the country, all the children of age could read the Scriptures, and were provided with Bibles either by their parents or their ministers. After a communion, there were no fewer than 60 aged people, men and women, went to school, that even then they might be able to read the Scriptures with their own eyes. I have lived many years in a parish where I never heard an oath, and you might have rid many a mile before you heard any. Also you could not, for a great part of the country, have lodged in a family where the Lord was not worshipped, by reading, singing, and prayer. Nobody complained of our Church government more than our taverners, whose ordinary lamentation was, their trade was broke, people were become so sober." *

This is the picture of a country under the full operation of the old parochial economy of Scotland—and can any doubt the excellence of that economy, and its fitness to secure the great ends of a union between Church and State. I am aware that Kirkton was a

* Kirkton's History, p. 54, 64.

young man when he wrote this, and that young men are apt to paint in warm colours. But there can be no question of the fact that a vast and visible reformation of manners had taken place in Scotland under restored presbytery.* The Earl of Marchmont, who lived in those days, bears testimony to the truth of Kirkton's statement; and facts of a similar nature could easily be produced. It appears from a manuscript history of Mr Pringle of Greenknow, who lived in the same period, and who was an excellent judge of religious matters, that in the different families of Pringle in the south of Scotland, to which he himself was related, and which were very numerous, there was not an individual who did not seem truly pious—that a similar spirit prevailed in the other great families in that quarter—and that when the Sacrament was dispensed in the times of persecution near the house of Kerr of Nisbet, it was attended by 3000 communicants, many of them exemplary for their religion, and that the leading gentlemen of the Merse, who were distinguished for their piety, officiated as elders.†

This testimony carries us into the twenty-eight years of persecution under Charles II. and his family, when the parochial system of Scotland was utterly broken up and destroyed. The very success, however, with which the people endured that dreadful persecu-

* For a vindication of Kirkton's authority, see Report of Church Patronage Committee,—Evidence of the eminent Dr M'Crie, p. 361.

† *Vide* Letter of the Rev. Dr Brown of Langton, to Rev. Dr Chalmers, p. 11.

tion—a persecution almost unparalleled in the history of the Christian Church—shews how much they had profited under the admirable moral and religious means which the parochial economy had ministered in the days of peace and prosperity. Had the nation not been well taught, such multitudes would not have been found, many of them in the humblest walks of society, ready, through a period of twenty-eight years duration, to sacrifice property and life itself upon the altar of liberty and religion.

It has been too common with many, who know little or nothing about the matter, to speak disrespectfully of our suffering forefathers, as if they had been a party of poor ignorant fanatics ; but apart from other evidence, any who will take the trouble to read what has been recorded of the addresses which some of them were permitted to deliver in the hour of their martyrdom, will at once perceive that they were not ignorant foolish men—that the poorest of them must have enjoyed the blessings of a sound scriptural education and an affectionate pastoral superintendence,—and that many of them must have been much more accustomed to read, and think, and reason, than their persecutors.

Were it necessary to appeal to other evidence, I might quote the testimony of Bishop Burnet, a zealous Episcopal minister, who lived in those times, and who describes the character of the men who had been brought up under the parochial economy of Scotland, in such terms as these :—“ The people of the country came generally to hear us, but not in great crowds. We were, indeed, amazed to see so poor a commonalty

so capable to argue upon points of government, or on the bounds to be set to the power of princes in matters of religion. Upon all these topics they had texts of Scripture at hand, and were ready with their answers to any thing that was said to them. This measure of knowledge was spread even among the meanest of them, their cottagers, and their servants." Burnet also expresses himself as being much struck with the extemporaneous prayers of these persons, as shewing to what knowledge their ministers had brought them.

I close the testimony to the excellence and fitness of the parochial economy of Scotland during her second reforming period, by quoting the following words from one of the public documents of the first Seceders. "During," say they, "the period now spoken of, our Lord Jesus favoured these isles with an abundant sowing of his good seed, and had a great harvest of souls; the power of godliness had a remarkable prevalence, with a considerable measure of reformation as to the outward state of the Church; nor is it any real discredit to this work, that Satan was then busy in sowing his tares, and in blowing up a fire of melancholy disorders. Amidst all this, the Lord brought about a work which was honourable afterwards, and he cannot bear that the reputation thereof should suffer from any concomitant mismanagements or infirmities of men."* Here, then, we have a second and a striking proof of the power of the parochial system of Scotland. It was severely tried, and it came forth from the trial victo-

* Solemn Warning by the Associate Synod, in 1758, p. 22

rious and pure. Even persecution, while destroying its forms, could not destroy its influence.

And now we pass on to a *third* proof of its amazing energy and success. The Revolution of 1688 restored the parochial economy. Both Church and State set vigorously forward to secure its great objects, and for ever prevent a return of the desolating days of Charles; and they were not unsuccessful in their aim. With regard to literature, an increased number of Schools were planted—regulations passed to promote their efficiency—a visitation of Colleges appointed; and as to the last, it is interesting to find, that while in the twenty-eight years of persecution there were but four Professorships established in the College of Edinburgh, not less than twelve were established in the same College in the same number of years immediately after the Revolution. With reference to Glasgow, again, there were in the years of persecution but ten bursaries founded, seven of them by one individual, while, in the same space of time, after the old economy of Scotland was restored, not less than twenty-four bursaries were founded,—discovering the revived taste for knowledge, and the anxiety to encourage others in its pursuit; and all this knowledge, it is to be remembered, was sanctified.*

Describing the general condition of the people, we have a testimony to their high moral and religious character, by Defoe, the author of the *Memoirs of the Church of Scotland*, who, on important public affairs,

* *Vide* Report on the Universities of Scotland, 1831.

visited our country. But the better to appreciate his testimony, it will be necessary, in the first instance, to allude to that of the celebrated Fletcher of Saltoun, in 1698, being ten years after the Revolution. Not a few good men imagine that persecution must always be of service to the cause of Christ; and they sometimes speak as if they could wish for its return. It is certain, that in the kind providence of God it has often been overruled to this end. But this is not its natural tendency any more than it is the natural tendency of affliction to sanctify the individual who is visited with it. The natural effect of persecution, if sufficiently long continued, and with sufficient severity, is to injure and destroy religion. Witness the extinction of the doctrines of the Reformation in Italy and Spain by its means. And even in our own country, while a great body of the people, under the happy parochial instruction which they had received, stood steadfast and undaunted on the side of God, a large body whose names are not recorded in history sunk amid broken vows and covenants into moral degradation.

The following is Fletcher's picture of a people fresh from persecution of twenty-eight years duration:—"There are," says he, "at this day, in Scotland, (besides a great number of families very meanly provided for by the Church boxes, who, with living upon bad food, fall into various diseases,) 200,000 people begging from door to door. These are not only no ways advantageous, but a very grievous burden to so poor a country; and though the number of them be perhaps double to what it was formerly, by reason of the pre-

sent great distress ; yet, in all times, there have been about 100,000 of these vagabonds who have lived without any regard or submission either to the laws of the land, or even of those of God and of nature." Then follows a description of crimes, which, for the sake of delicacy, I pass over ; the writer goes on to say :—" No magistrate could ever discover or be informed which way any of these wretches died, or that they were ever baptised. Many murders have been discovered among them, and they are not only a most unspeakable oppression to poor tenants, (who, if they give not bread or some sort of provision to perhaps forty such villains in one day, are sure to be insulted by them,) but they rob many poor people who live in houses distant from any neighbourhood. In years of plenty, many thousands of them meet together in the mountains, where they feast and riot for many days ; and at country weddings, markets, burials, and other like public occasions, they are to be seen, both men and women, perpetually drunk, cursing, blaspheming, and fighting together."* Such is Fletcher's account ; and as at this period the population of Scotland amounted to only one million, so it is plain there must have been about a-fifth of the whole living in profligacy, and by plunder. What a contrast to the same people as described by Kirkton forty years before. Surely the present condition of Ireland is not more frightful and degraded than was the condition of our country at that day. Such was the state of beg-

* *Vide* First Discourse, p. 144.

accounts for Holy Fair &c

gary and wretchedness, that two acts of Parliament were passed, and four proclamations issued, to build houses of correction, and establish a system of poors-rate like that of England. *

And now that we have seen the miserable consequences of a breaking up and abandonment of the parochial system, let us next, and for the third time on a great scale, see how its restoration delivered the country from the wretched condition into which it had fallen. In the year 1717, or nineteen years from the period of Fletcher's dreadful picture, we have the following statement by Defoe, whose general accuracy is unquestionable:—"The people," says he, "are restrained in the ordinary practice of common immoralities, such as swearing, drunkenness, slander, licentiousness, and the like. As to theft, murder, and other capital crimes, they come under the cognizance of the civil magistrate as in other countries, but in those things which the Church has power to punish, the people being constantly and impartially prosecuted, *i. e.*, subjected to the discipline of the Church, they are thereby the more restrained, kept sober, and under government, and you pass through twenty towns in Scotland without seeing any broil, or hearing one oath sworn in the streets; whereas, if a blind man was to come from these parts into England, he shall know the first town he sets his foot on within the English border, by hearing the name of God blasphemed and

* See Parliamentary Evidence on the Poor by Dr Chalmers.

profanely used, even by the very little children in the streets."

The accuracy of the wonderful state of things which has been described, is borne out by the singular fact, that prior to 1700, there were but *three* parishes where a legal assessment was established for the support of the poor, and forty years afterwards there were but *eight* parishes in this predicament; * though the Legislature was so anxious to provide a source of relief of this kind, and though, a few years before, there were such multitudes of the destitute and abandoned ready to avail themselves of its aid. Nothing can explain this remarkable fact as to the poor, but the influence of Scriptural knowledge widely diffused, through means of the revived parochial economy. The Bible outstripped the poors-rate and rendered it unnecessary in twenty years.

From twenty years after the Revolution, down to the middle of last century, and even later, immense exertions were made by the Church, to extend the parochial system, especially in the Highlands and Islands. Indeed, her exertions were almost incredible. They can be suitably known only by those who will take the pains carefully to study the history of the Church, as scattered through many volumes, some of them folio volumes, and these exertions are the more wonderful that influences were now at work within the Church herself, which were greatly fitted to paralyze her spirit and la-

* Parliamentary Report on the Poor.

bours. I cannot enter fully into this period of history; suffice it to say, that not a few churches were built, and new parishes erected, partly by collections throughout the Church, and partly by the liberality of families of station and influence, whom the General Assembly, on some occasions, publicly thanked for their services. A large number of ministers knowing Gaelic, were sent from the Lowlands to itinerate regularly, and for appointed seasons, in the Highlands. Great efforts were used to train up young men having the Gaelic language, for Highland charges. Schools were planted along with the Church, and not unfrequently did the General Assembly, from her slender resources, legally require heritors to fulfil the provisions of the State as to schools; and also, vindicate mortifications which had been made for the use of the poor and the purposes of education, from the grasping avarice which laboured to appropriate them for itself.

An important society in connection with the Establishment, and in some respects under its controul,—the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge,—started at the beginning of last century, and zealously sought to supplement the deficiency of the parochial system, or rather to cover the ground which the parochial system, in the Highlands and Islands, had not been able to overtake. It provided missionaries, catechists, and schoolmasters. The schools were both industrious and scriptural, and at the end of last century amounted to 300 in number. This was a

considerable extension of the parochial system ; and though, owing to the great physical barriers of the country, the Church, neither by her own direct exertions nor by those of the society, has been able fully to meet and supply the moral and religious wants of the whole Gaelic population, yet, under every disadvantage, important fruit has been gained. Sabbath observance in the Highlands greatly improved from the year 1730.* The number of Roman Catholics underwent a serious diminution. In 1747, the Popish priests complain bitterly of the erection of new parishes, and the establishment of the society schools, as withdrawing their people from them;† and a few years later, about 1758, it appears that the whole body of Catholics who were computed in Scotland, did not exceed some 17,000,‡ though not a great many years before, they were the prevailing party, both in the Highlands and Islands. Here then is a fresh proof of the triumphs of the parochial system, and the praise undividedly belongs to it ; for down to the period of the Rebellion in 1745, there were no openings of industry, no improvement in public affairs, which could be supposed beneficially to affect the moral condition of the people.

The fruits of the operation of the parochial system in the Highlands are visible to the present day. Though

* Rev. Dr Lee's Evidence before Sabbath Committee.

† Account of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, drawn up by Rev. Mr R. Walker, 1748.

‡ See a Roman Catholic Catechism published at that period.

that system has not been carried fully out,—though there are districts where it may be said never to have been applied, and where, therefore, it would be vain to expect the same results ; yet the Rev. Dr Kemp, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, secretary to the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and familiarly acquainted with the Highlands and Islands, wrote thus in 1803:—"In the Highlands and Islands of Scotland," says he, "peace and good order, loyalty and decency of manners, universally prevail. Through the remotest districts the single unprotected unarmed stranger may travel by night or by day in perfect safety. In every hamlet in which the darkness of night or the violence of the storm may compel him to take shelter, he may rest assured of a hospitable reception,—his fare will be homely, but it will be the best which the cottage can afford,—his bed will be hard, but his sleep will be secure. On this head the writer can speak with confidence, for through these districts, in a course of successive years, he has travelled, and such was the treatment which he everywhere experienced. If it be asked what constitutes so wonderful a difference between the Highland Scottish and the Irish peasantry,—both nations were derived from the same stock, they speak the same language, their manners and customs were originally the same,—the only answer that can be given is, that the one class, without the means of education or instruction in the first principles of religion and literature, are left in all the wildness and ferocity of uncultivated nature, while

the greater part of the other are trained up, from their earliest years, in the knowledge and practice of true religion and sound morality." *

Most excellent and trust-worthy as this testimony is, I cannot withhold from you a similar testimony from a pen whose unrivalled eloquence and power will immediately betray it. More than twenty years ago, when known only as Mr Chalmers, minister at Kilmany, the genius which has since delighted the world, and thrown a flood of light upon the great moral relations of society, thus beautifully speaks of the Highlands of our country :—"What would they have been at this moment," says he, "had schools and bibles and ministers been kept back from them, and had the men of a century ago been deterred by the flippancies of the present age from the work of planting chapels and seminaries in that neglected land? The ferocity of their ancestors would have come down unsoftened and unsubdued to the existing generation. The darkening spirit of hostility would still have lowered upon us from the north, and these plains, now so peaceful and so happy, would have lain open to the fury of merciless invaders. Oh! ye soft and sentimental travellers, who wander so securely over this romantic land, you are right to chuse the season when the angry elements of nature are asleep. But what is it which has charmed to their long repose the more dreadful elements of human passion and human injustice? What is it which has

* *Vide* Dr Kemp's Sermon preached before the Society.

quelled the boisterous spirit of her natives? And while her torrents roar as fiercely, and her mountains' brows look as grimly as ever, what is that which has thrown so softening an influence over the minds and manners of her living population?" *

Such has been the working of the parochial economy of Scotland, both in the Lowlands and the Highlands, not in one but in different periods of Scottish history; and who can doubt the original excellence of that economy, and its fitness to secure the grand ends of a union between Church and State?—the point which it is the object of this Lecture to establish. Nor let it be imagined that, beneficial as that working is, it must necessarily be slow and unseen, or, at all events, must exclude great and visible spiritual changes. Most will, I apprehend, consider it a very small matter, if good be wrought, what are the particular forms in which it appears; and the fact, that repeatedly, in the course of twenty years, the parochial system, under God, accomplished the most wonderful moral revolutions, will prevent any reasonable man from thinking its movements slow. But if it be imagined that the regular and formal working of the parochial system is adverse to remarkable interpositions of the Spirit of God, no mistake can be greater. While the system gradually and surely obtains the Divine blessing where faithfully administered, it is well known that no Church has ever been visited with more extraor-

* Rev. Dr Chalmers' Sermon before the Society in 1814.

dinary or glorious Revivals of religion, than the Parochial Church of Scotland. In every period in which the old economy was restored there were special revivals of religion. The names of not a few parishes have thus been transmitted in honour to posterity, and God has thus stamped the seal of his approbation,—a marked and extraordinary as well as more common seal, upon the parochial system of our fathers. It would be well if many Churches could boast in their history either of the ordinary or extraordinary blessings of heaven upon their labours, to the same extent as the Church of Scotland.*

And now, having spoken of the parochial system, having shewn what it is in itself, and what have been its effects in different ages, I must be permitted to ask in the way of contrast, what the opposite—the Congregational or Voluntary system—has accomplished. While the parochial system has benefitted and elevated every class of the community, its care has been in a special manner directed to the young and the poor,—and two more interesting classes cannot well be conceived. And what has the Voluntary system done for them? It has, indeed, provided religious instruction of all the various shades of sound and unsound sentiment, for those who are able and willing to pay for it. I do not ask whether the provision which has been made is always on a satisfactory footing, either as regards the support of the minister or the comfort of the

* See Rev. Dr Gillies' Historical Collections, 2 vols.

managers. But I ask what have the Dissenters done for the young? What schools have they established? What is their number? For myself, I confess that after no little enquiry I know only of two or three. I shall be happy to hear that they are more numerous, and also of older standing, and better fitted for the poor than those of my acquaintance. But has it been any part of the Voluntary system to rear schools alongside of the Voluntary church, and to afford at once a religious and enlarged education to the children of the poor at a cheap rate? It is well known that there has been nothing of this kind. Dissenting congregations, and I do not blame them, I blame the system, have, in most instances, had enough to do to provide for the minister and the chapel, without any additional expenditure.

And then, what has the Voluntary system done for the poor? I do not ask what it has done for their temporal support. I do not ask whether Dissenting congregations always or generally support the poor, even of their own number: I know, as an administrator of the affairs of the poor in Glasgow, that this is not the case, that, independent of the vast mass of poor who attend upon no religious instruction of any Church, our Dissenting congregations generally do not support, or adequately support, their own poor. And this is another unhappy consequence of abandoning the parochial system. But it is not the temporal provision for the poor about which I wish to speak. I ask what has the Voluntary system done for the spiritual provision of the poor? Looking to our large towns, a short-

sighted man may be ready to exclaim : “ There is a greater number of poor in the Dissenting than the Established Churches.” But why is this? Because in our large towns there is really no Established Church, and scarcely any parochial economy at all—all are upon the Voluntary plan. The object, in every case, is to make the churches pay themselves. This is not the Established but the Voluntary system, and cannot be carried into effect without excluding the poorest classes, both from what are called the Established and Dissenting Churches ; and hence, while there may be more of the poorer classes in the large towns in Dissenting than in the Established Churches, there is a far larger body of still poorer people who are in no churches whatever. I need scarcely remind you that in country parishes, where the parochial economy is still kept up, you find the poorest children in the parish schools, and the poorest parents in the parish church.

But I return to the question, What has the Voluntary system done for the poorest people in our large towns? Has it provided fully and adequately for their spiritual instruction? If the system be sound, it ought to have done so,—the more especially quickened, as it has been, into vigour by rivalry with the Establishment. But what is the fact? Why, it is the fact, that were every sitting in every church, Established and Dissenting, fully let and fully occupied, good, bad, and indifferent, there would still be 35,000 people in Glasgow who are of an age to be in church or chapel every Sabbath-day, for whom there is not one sitting for one of

them. This corresponds to a population of 70,000 strangers to the means of grace, and these are the poorest classes,—the very persons who, above all others, need the consolations and the hopes of true religion.* Estimated in the same way, though every church and chapel, Established and Dissenting, in Edinburgh, were fully let, there would still be above 7000 persons who should be in church or chapel every Lord's-day, for whom there is not a single sitting. This of itself would require seven new churches, and the ministers would labour among a destitute population of 14,000 souls.† So it is of our other large towns, such as Dundee and Paisley, where, though every place of worship were filled to overflowing, there would still be thousands on thousands of poor for whom there is

* For proof of the above, see the Tract entitled “The Poor Man's Church Defended.” By the author of this Lecture.—Collins, Glasgow. 

† My authority for this statement is “The Edinburgh Encyclopædia,” published the other day by Mr Adam Black, under the article “Edinburgh.” Taking the population of Edinburgh as there given, (without including Leith,) and making allowance for its increase in the same ratio *since the census was taken*, and comparing the result with the amount of church accommodation, as stated by the Voluntary Church Association in their memorial to Lord Brougham, not forgetting the fact that not a few seats in the Edinburgh places of worship are occupied by persons from neighbouring country parishes, it will be found that the result is rather under than above the mark.

neither church nor minister.* Even in the country districts there is a great destitution. Not long ago there were 13,000 people, corresponding to a population of 26,000, in the rural parts of the county of Lanark,† for whom the Voluntary system had not provided a single sitting, and their religious condition has not improved since. In my own parish, which is situated in one of the most respectable parts of the city of Glasgow, there are, out of a population of 6000, not fewer than 1000, who, according to their own acknowledgment, have no sittings in any place of worship whatever. They would need 500 sittings to give them merely the same advantages which are enjoyed by their neighbours. The ecclesiastical condition of other parishes, which are situated in inferior parts of

* In Greenock alone, the population of which is about 30,000, it appears from accurate statistics, published the other day, (*Scottish Guardian*, March 27) there are 5140 persons of age to attend upon ordinances every Sabbath, who would not have a single sitting even if every seat in every existing church and chapel, Established and Dissenting, were fully let. This corresponds to the destitute population of 10,000, which is one-third of the whole population of Greenock. According to the same statistics the Dissenters have provided 2580 sittings, which supplies only a third part of the destitute population, leaving two-thirds unsupplied. This was in the year 1830; and the reports of religious societies, to which the names of Dissenting ministers are appended, shew that the population who are strangers to attendance on the means of grace is not less at the present day.

† See Cleland's Statistics, 1831.

the city, is tenfold worse. The College and Tron, St. Enoch's, the Gorbals, and Barony parishes, present results which are sufficient to put Voluntaryism to utter shame and confusion. And now, with such facts before us, what are we to think of the Voluntary system in its provision for the poor? Can the poor account it their friend? *

* Since delivering this lecture, my attention has been called to a publication entitled "State of Church Accommodation in Scotland by the Scottish Central Board," viz. of Voluntaries; and I am bold to say, that considered as the production of men professing Christianity, a more infamous document I never read. I cannot, in a note, enter into any exposure of its manifold fallacies; nor is this necessary, as they have been already, and will ere long be satisfactorily examined; but I cannot help noticing, in passing, a few of its deceptions. The Board then grossly exaggerate the number of Dissenters in Scotland, and set down all who are not in communion with the Establishment as Dissenters, though it is well known that a third or a fourth part of the whole maintain the principles of an Establishment, and would spurn at the name of Voluntary Dissenters. Then they give up the Roman Catholics, and the irreligious and profane in our large towns, as parties for whom it is not needful to provide Protestant church accommodation, which is equivalent to a tacit confession that Voluntaryism at least can do nothing effectual to reclaim them, and that therefore they must be left to themselves,—a mode of procedure, which, had it been followed by our forefathers, would have retained our country in the hands of Popery to the present hour. Then they misrepresent the standard of church accommodation, and so introduce fallacy and confusion into all their calculations, and always proceed upon the population as it stood in 1831, while they take the church accommodation of 1835, as if there had been no increase of the people in the last four years. Nay;

We have seen what the parochial system has wrought out in different ages in Scotland ; how it taught every child, and provided a bible for every family, and built a church for all who should attend on divine ordinances ; and how it destroyed Popery, and pauperism, and intemperance, and ignorance, and crime, and the spirit of rebellion, in the course of a few years, and *that* while there was not what now a days is called a

they count on church accommodation which is not yet in existence ! for instance, two Established churches in Paisley, one of which is only building, the other of which has not yet obtained a site, both are set down as *unlet* ! Then they are guilty of insulting the poor by practically telling them that whether they approve or not of Dissent, in its sound or unsound forms, they must fill up the existing Dissenting chapels before the State shall be permitted to supply them with religious instruction. Because Dissenters, in mutual rivalry, and strife, and discord, have often separated from each other, and built additional places of worship, these places of worship are all to be held as supplying the community with church accommodation ; and till they are occupied with hearers, whether men do or do not wish to become Dissenters, they shall have no new churches,—no additional ministers of the truth. Socinian chapels must be filled,—in other words, hundreds and thousands of souls must be destroyed for ever ere any increase of religious means is to be permitted ! It were easy to allude to many other principles both fallacious and pernicious in the Statement, but this note is already too long. I shall only add, it is not very difficult to see a reason why the Dissenters wish for no more new churches or ministers, when, according to their own shewing, it appears that in Edinburgh they have 8426 unlet sittings in their chapels, 4321 unlet in Perth, being one-half of their whole church accommodation in that town ; and must have some 5000 unlet

Dissenter in the land. And what has the Voluntary system done for Scotland? I do not undervalue the preaching of the gospel by Dissenters, and its blessed effects, so far as it is the gospel which is preached; God forbid. I honour the labours of faithful men in every Christian denomination of Dissenters; but after making all due allowance for what they have accomplished, what have they left unaccomplished? What immense fields have they left untrodden, though, were their system true or sound, there should be no field which they have not occupied and reclaimed? To what period of Scottish history can they appeal for the successful working of their system? To what Calderwood, or Kirkton, or Defoe can they refer for proof of its wondrous doings? When or where did the Voluntary system present the fruits of Scotland's first, and second, and third Reformations under the

in Paisley, and some 9000 unlet in Glasgow at least. Nor is it difficult to understand the present conduct of Dissenters, when such facts not unfrequently occur as *seventy* persons who sat with the Dissenters at Hamilton taking seats in the new Established Church there the moment it was opened, and the same description of persons taking 112 sittings in the new erection in Cambridge Street, Glasgow, as soon as opened.—(Vide “The Poor Man’s Enemies Exposed;” by the Rev. James Gibson Glasgow, page 3.) Were there, as the Voluntary Board alleges, really a surplus, and a great surplus of Christian means in this country, while we know that ignorance, and vice, and crime are seriously advancing, it would be no easy matter to vindicate Christianity from the charge of the infidel that it is weak and inefficient.



parochial system? When could it be affirmed of a Voluntary system, that under it “every parish had a minister, every village had a school, every family almost had a bible. I have lived many years in a parish where I never heard an oath, and you might have rode many a mile before you heard any.” When could it be affirmed, that under its operation family worship was almost universal, and the usual complaint of publicans was, “their trade was broke, people had become so sober.” If the Voluntary system were sound or scriptural, such effects as these should be frequent and common, nay, they should be far greater, and more glorious, than the same effects wrought out by such an unscriptural institution as a Church Establishment with its parochial system, and yet we look in vain for the boasted fruits of the Voluntary scheme, while I cannot condense into any reasonable space the array of historical testimonies which crowd in upon me, in proof of the benefits of our parochial institutions.

The Dissenters have had ample time, and enough of rivalry among themselves and with the Established Church to keep them busy, and yet where are the fruits of their operation which may compare with those of the system which they decry? Voluntaryism has had full play in our large towns and manufacturing districts, where the State has been doing nothing for a century. It has had abundance of people to operate upon,—no one has been hindering it from doing its utmost,—nay, churchmen have sometimes given it no inconsiderable assistance, and in very sub-

stantial forms too. Some quarters may be said to have been left almost wholly to the Dissenters, such as Dunfermline, Dundee, Paisley, Glasgow,—and what have they done for these districts? Is the portion of the population which, in these cases, is out of the Establishment, and so under the full influence of Voluntaryism, remarkable for religion, and has it been so all along? Have there been great revivals of vital godliness among them? Has there, in a single town, been any approach to those fruits which Kirkton describes as holding true nearly of a nation? Ah! my friends, while under the parochial system, ignorance disappeared, and Popery disappeared, and sabbath profanation, and intemperance, and rebellion disappeared;—under the Voluntary system, and in spite of all the religion which it can sow and scatter among the people, ignorance is encreasing. (It has been lately made out, that Scotland is but a half-taught nation, and that there are 80,000 persons in the Highlands who cannot read;*) sabbath profanation is encreasing,—drunkenness has fearfully encreased,—Popery is encreasing, and a hatred of all restraint from the laws whether of God or of man, is not asleep.

Nor has the Voluntary system been more successful in other quarters. In Belfast, the population is encreasing at the rate of about 2000 a-year, and for the last ten years, all the religious provision which has

* See Mr Lewis' excellent Pamphlet, "Scotland a Half Educated Nation."

been made for such encreasing wants, is not *one-half* of what is required, without taking the destitution of previous thousands into account, so that, to use the language of the Belfast Town Mission, "our large towns are now growing into hordes of heathens." * In Manchester again, the Voluntary system has left 32,000 persons, who should be in church or chapel in the Establishment or among the Dissenters every sabbath, for whom there is not a single sitting, though every seat in every existing assembly or church were fully occupied. This corresponds to a population of 64,000.† In London, the same system has left several hundred thousand poor persons to die of spiritual starvation; and in the United States of America, I have proved, and challenged again and again for a reply, that the Voluntary system has left 6000 churches unsupplied with ministers, and between five and six millions of people to live and die in practical heathenism, and all this, you will remember, on the testimony, not of hasty half-informed travellers, but of the public official documents of Christian Churches, and Christian Societies, about which there can be no dispute.‡ Now, I ask, did the parochial system of Scotland ever discover such weakness as this? Was it ever

* *Vide* Sixth Report of the Belfast Town Mission, 1833.

† See Statistics made out on the Discussion as to the Church Rate.

‡ *Vide* "The Past and Present Condition of Religion in America," and "Exposure of Colten," in the Church of Scotland Magazine. By the writer of this Lecture.

guilty of such delinquency in duty? Did it ever leave 10,000 in one town, and 14,000 in another, and 30,000 in another, and 70,000 in another, a prey to the tender mercies of the Wicked one? Compare such authenticated statements as these with the equally authentic historical statements of the doings of the Church of Scotland, in three separate periods of her history; and can any one doubt whether the parochial or the Voluntary system be the better. How strikingly is the testimony of fact at one with the testimony of Scripture!

But I must hasten, in conclusion, to answer the objections which have been, or which may be brought against the parochial system. And its benefits have been so fully explained that this part of the subject will be short and easy.

1st. It is alleged that the Reformation could not have been so prosperous in Scotland at the periods to which I have alluded, as days of fasting and humiliation for public sins were very frequent, and these sins are often enumerated in the official documents of the church. Now, the answer to this is, that with all the high, and vigorous, and diffusive Christianity which was so prevalent in Scotland in the different periods of her Reformation, there was no little sin and short-coming. There would have been no room for discipline had there been no offenders,—the church would not have been part of the visible church. Had she alleged that she was perfect and without stain, this would have been

the most suspicious feature in her religious character. The very fact of the frequency of the days of fasting and humiliation and public confession, is the strongest of all proofs how tender was the national conscience, and how high was the moral and religious standard to which the church sought to bring the nation. Hence it is, that it was always when the church was purest that her days of humiliation were most frequent. When she was coldest and most insensible, there are fewer traces of such observances. To plead days of fasting, and the acknowledgments which they bear against the religious condition of Scotland in former times, is to plead the evidence of religious revival in proof of the prevalence of corruption. It is like taking the diary of a holy man, and extracting his confession of sin and humiliation as evidence that he is an atrocious offender.

But, *2dly*, it is alleged that our praise of the parochial system, and our assertion of its being essential to cover a nation fully and adequately with the means of grace, is a reflection upon Christianity as it was propagated in primitive times. Now, it is to be observed, that whatever was the state of things in the earlier ages of the church, the facts which I have adduced in proof of the power of the Parochial and the weakness of the Voluntary system in modern times remain the same. They are not affected by the experience of the church 1800 years ago in other countries, supposing that experience to be different from ours. But the truth is, that though God had his own parti-

cular ends to serve by the way in which the Gospel was propagated in early times, and though it is difficult to see how, in the then condition of the world, it could have been diffused otherwise than it was diffused, yet it is one of the grossest mistakes to imagine that Christianity really pervaded the body of the people throughout the Roman empire. It is common speaking, in a popular manner, to say that Christianity overspread the Roman empire in the course of forty or fifty years from the days of the Apostles; and great indeed was the progress of the Gospel; nor is this wonderful, when so powerfully assisted by miracles; but if by such language it is meant that Christianity pervaded the body of the people as it did in this country under the parochial economy, few mistakes can be more wide of the truth.

From the prevailing heresies and corruptions in the Christian church, even in the days of the Apostles,—such heresies and corruptions as never disgraced the Established Church of Scotland,—and from the limited views and humble attainments of the Christian Fathers and their successors, it is quite plain that Christianity was not generally understood, and that a great body of the people must have been Christians but in name; while the fact that the same word which means a peasant or countryman means a pagan* or heathen, is a clear proof that the gospel had not penetrated the rural districts, whatever may have been

* Paganus.

its success in the great towns;—in short, that the far larger part of the population remained heathen. If it be objected that this representation goes to invalidate one of the evidences of Christianity, my answer is, that the evidences of Christianity will never be really injured by the statement of truth, though they may be, and have been injured by exaggerated statements about the truth by injudicious friends,—that there is ample evidence of the rapid propagation of the gospel, and of its divine origin, without supposing it reached and pervaded the whole population of the Roman empire,—that the Bible always takes for granted its truths are to be diffused in the use of proper and adequate means,—and farther, that Voluntaryism brings much greater discredit on the evidences of Revelation, contending, as it does, that men in the highest relations of life, in the character of civil magistrates, are to do nothing to extend the true religion, and boasting that voluntary liberality is quite sufficient for its universal diffusion, though infidelity sees and knows well that the case is notoriously the reverse.

3dly, It is alleged, and with some confidence, that it was as a Voluntary Church the Church of Scotland in former times accomplished the moral wonders of which I have been speaking. This error springs from men confounding the Voluntary principle and Voluntary liberality. These two are quite distinct. The Voluntary principle consists in denying the religious duties of the civil magistrate, and forbidding him to acknowledge or support Christianity. Of course the

principles of an Established Church are quite opposed to such views. On the other hand, Voluntary liberality consists in diffusing Christianity by the free will contributions of the people ; and so far as it goes, an Established Church has no objections to this. Nay, such liberality is expressly recognised in the Standards of the Church of Scotland as sound and good. Its great fault is that it is too weak to extend far enough. Hence even supposing it were true that when supported in a chief degree by private liberality, the Church of Scotland achieved her moral triumphs, this would not entitle any one to call her a Voluntary Church, or to say that when she bore this character she was most successful. The Church of Scotland never was a Voluntary Church. She has all along abjured the principles of Voluntaryism. From the very earliest period of the Reformation she sought and obtained the recognition of the public authorities and their countenance as a Church of Christ. And even as to temporal support, she, from the year of the Reformation received some public assistance, very inadequate indeed, and this was a great matter of complaint with her ministers, but still some State assistance. It was in these circumstances she gained her noble triumphs ; and it is well known that in her success after the Revolution in 1688, which some authorities, —and these no mean ones,—account her best period, she was both a legally recognised and legally provided Church.—So little acquaintance have some of our

Voluntary opponents with the most notorious facts of history.

4thly, But farther, it is alleged against the parochial system of Scotland, that there is no principle of expansion in it, and that it soon degenerated and stood still, particularly from the middle down towards the close of the last century. Now, supposing this objection to be well founded, you will remark that it does not affect the wonderful facts to which I have already appealed in behalf of the blessed operation of the parochial system; and probably reasonable men will have some doubts as to the want of expansion in an economy, which, three several times in the course of twenty years respectively, covered a degraded country with the moral verdure of the garden of the Lord. I admit that the parochial system stood still, and even degenerated in the last century; but was this owing to any inherent defect in the economy itself? No. It was owing to a particular combination of causes, which no system, whether voluntary or parochial, could withstand. The parochial system was essentially injured by the measure as to Lay Patronage, and the evils which it drew along with it. Nor was this all;—a moral blight came over Christendom, and upon the Church of Scotland, in common with all the Churches Established and Dissenting at home and abroad—a blight, from which I rejoice to think that of late years all have been recovering, and none more rapidly than the Established Churches of this country. The Dissenters of England

suffered as deeply in that religious declension as the Church of Scotland, yea, more deeply. As this answer, will go to neutralize one of the most popular objections brought against the Established Church, I shall enter a little into the proof.

Any one who will take the trouble to read old Job Orton's Letters to Dissenting Ministers, and he lived in the period of the religious declension, was himself a Dissenter, and is a first-rate authority, will see how miserably low the interests of vital religion had sunk among the English Dissenters. The admirable Doddridge, at an earlier period, speaking of the Dissenters of his day, says, "The defection of our younger ministers I greatly lament. The dissenting interest is not like itself ;—I hardly know it ;—I hear prayers and sermons which I neither relish nor understand ;—evangelical truth and duty are quite old-fashioned." So irreligious and unscriptural had the Dissenters become, that we are informed by the Eclectic Review, one of their warmest advocates, "that the secessions from the ranks of Dissenters, about the beginning of the reign of George II., were numerous, and must have had a considerable weight on account of the character and talents of the individuals who conformed to the Church. Some of those, says Calamy, who had before gone over from us to the Church, *had* been scandalous ; but it was otherwise as to those who now conformed ; they were generally persons of sobriety and unblemished character, and might therefore be received and caressed by those whom they fell in with

with a better grace.”* Among them were Butler, the celebrated author of “The Analogy,” afterwards Bishop of Durham, and Secker, who became Archbishop of Canterbury. Four-and-twenty other persons are named by Dr Calamy, several of them the sons of Dissenting ministers of repute.

Orton again thus writes, in 1769, to a young minister. After describing the unevangelical preaching so prevalent among the Dissenters of those days, he says, “ Their congregations are in a wretched state—some are dwindling to nothing, as is the case with several in this neighbourhood, where there are not now as many scores as there were hundreds in their meeting-houses fifty years ago ; but when, by trade and manufactures new persons come to the place, and fill up the vacant seats, there is a fatal deadness spread over the congregation. They run in the course of this world—follow every fashionable folly—and family and personal godliness seems in general to be lost among them. There is scarcely any appearance of life or zeal in the cause of religion which demands and deserves the greatest.” (Vol. i. p. 101.) Again, a few years later, he writes, speaking of a minister, “ I hope he will be long spared, as his life is of great importance to our interest in its present low state. I am glad to hear it revives among you, but it is almost sunk to nothing in those parts of Cheshire which I am acquainted with,

* Eclectic Review, Page 99, 1832.

and this, I think, must be owing to that, which is indeed the grand source of its decay everywhere, the want of seriousness in our ministers, and by their principles and practices, making concessions in favour of fashionable indulgences, and neglect of religious exercises." Again, in 1777, he thus writes of the state of religion among the Dissenters of London:—"I grieve for the state of things amongst us, especially in and about London. The spirit of the world, and the love of dissipation and trifles prevail so much, as to eat out the very life of religion, and throw public worship into a matter of mere entertainment, or an idle ceremony." But I can appeal to the evidence of statistics as well as of general testimony. It appears from an account drawn up by Daniel Neal, a Dissenting historian in 1715, that at that period there were in all about 2800 Dissenting congregations in England, of which nearly 1400 were Presbyterian. Now, it appears from a particular catalogue drawn up by Josiah Thomson, a Baptist minister, about sixty years afterwards, that the whole number of Dissenting congregations in England and Wales only amounted to 1701, plainly shewing, that in the course of sixty years not fewer than 1100 Dissenting congregations had perished, either by falling to pieces, or by conforming, as some of the ministers did, to the Established Church. Even so late as 1808, Bogue and Bennett, in their *History of Dissenters*, give (apart from the Methodists) only 2002 for all the Dissenting congregations of England and Wales, which is 800 congregations less than the Dissenters counted

a century earlier, thus shewing how fatal had been the effects of the degeneracy of evangelical religion among them, and how little the Dissenters Proper had done to meet the spiritual necessities of the vast population which had accumulated in the meantime. The Presbyterians of England, who formerly boasted of 1400 congregations, can now only muster 206—they are all Socinian—and 170 out of the 206 were liberally endowed by orthodox Presbyterians.*

Such is a picture of the English Dissenters of last century as supplied by themselves. Andrew Fuller, the eminent Baptist minister, bears the same testimony. And, let me ask, what degeneracy of Religion in the Church of Scotland,—what stagnation of the parochial system, can for one moment be compared in magnitude with such results as these? Whether is the Voluntary or the parochial economy the more secure against defection, decay, and ruinous heresy? So far from the parochial system being inherently defective and stationary, it raised up a barrier to some extent against the spirit of error and irreligion. Had it not been for its native strength and acceptance with the people of Scotland, the progress of degeneracy would have been still more deep and rapid than it was; and as to its expansive character, the far-seeing wis-

* *Vide* "Orthodox Presbyterian," Belfast, June 1834. The interesting series of articles on this subject is, I understand, from the pen of the Rev. Mr Fairley, of the Scotch Church, Whitehaven, who, I trust, will continue his investigation. This period of religious history is little known.

dom of the fathers of the parochial system seems to have contemplated the unappropriated teind as a provision to meet the spiritual wants of a future and increased population. And ill, indeed, does it become those to object to the want of expansion in the parochial economy, who have strenuously opposed every projected extension, and who are labouring with all their might, at the present moment, to prevent its enlargement, in the only way in which the admirers of the parochial system conscientiously believe to be truly available.

5thly, The last objection to the parochial system to which I shall allude is, that it cherishes a contracted and selfish spirit. It is perhaps allowed that it may powerfully promote the interests of the truth within its locality, but it is alleged that this very concentration of regard upon a limited space is adverse to an enlarged spirit and missionary zeal. Now, allowing the objection to be well founded, it is questionable whether the advantages gained by the parochial system would not greatly overbalance such evils as those complained of; but the fact is, that whatever contributes to the spread of true Christianity at home, most essentially promotes the cause of Christianity at a distance. As vital religion grows, in the same proportion does a missionary spirit grow. If in some parishes and districts of Scotland, there has been too little missionary enterprise and zeal; this has not been owing to the presence of the parochial system, but to the absence of a truly religious

spirit. When the Church of Scotland was, in point of parochial economy, in her greatest vigour and purity, she was then also most thoroughly missionary in her spirit and undertakings. To refer but to one period in her history, I may mention a few facts not generally known, which at once shew that Voluntary liberality (though not Voluntary principle) has been extensively acted upon in the Church of our Fathers, and that the parochial economy is not inconsistent with the missionary spirit.

Ascending no higher than the Revolution in 1688, I find from the Acts of Assembly, that shortly after a collection was made throughout the Church to assist the reformed congregation in Koningsberg in Poland in building a place of worship, and that a year later, four ministers were sent out to the colony of Caledonia, on the application of the Indian and African Company. In 1709, a collection was made for building a new place of worship, and supporting a minister for the reformed Germans in London. Six years later, a handsome contribution of nearly £650, equal to four times its present value, was transmitted to London for the use of a German Calvinist congregation there. In 1718, a collection was asked and granted in behalf of the Protestant Churches of Lithuania, and in a single year the Church of our Fathers sent the magnificent sum of above £4100, equal to £16,000 of our present money, and at the same time, entered into the resolution of maintaining and educating two Lithuanian students at the University of Edinburgh,—a resolution

which with successive young men was observed for many years. It appears that in 1729, a collection was made in behalf of the French and German Protestants residing at Copenhagen who had suffered from fire; and that ten years later, a similar collection was made in behalf of the Swiss of Piedmont when suffering from the effects of an inundation. In 1752, again, I find that the Protestant Church of Breslau, in Silesia, received a collection of £1100 from the poor Established Church of Scotland.

Nor was the Voluntary liberality and Missionary spirit of the Church confined to the Continent of Europe, it comprehended America in its wide and beneficent concern. So early as 1732, more than a hundred years ago, the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, (a society, you will remember, in strict connection with the Establishment,) sent out three Missionaries to spread Christianity among the American Indians, and in subsequent years added considerably to the number of ministers, catechists, and schoolmasters. Of the first class was the celebrated Brainerd, one of the noblest of Missionaries or of men. In 1753, six ministers and schoolmasters were sent out from Scotland to supply the destitute churches in America, and other six were promised; and next year, not less than £1140, 9s. 11d. were collected by the Established Church for the German Presbyterians in Pennsylvania, and transmitted. Seven years later, a collection was granted in behalf of the Presbyterian ministers of the same province to supply their own wants,

and enable them to preach the gospel to the Indians; and the sum of money sent by the voluntary liberality of the Church of Scotland, amounted to not less than £1284, 4s. 11d.

With regard again to the American colleges, that of New Jersey was deeply indebted to our Church. Commissioners came over, among whom Samuel Davies was one, to beg for assistance. They pleaded their cause in our General Assembly, and a most deplorable view did they give of the moral and religious necessities of their land at that period, and most warmly did they acknowledge the bounty of the Church of Scotland. About the same period, or rather a little later, in 1766, two American ministers came from New England to this country to raise money for building a college for rearing native preachers among the Indians, and the poor parishes of Scotland contributed not less than £2529 in behalf of this object, and that too at a season when the Church was labouring to reclaim our own country from the remains of Popery, ignorance, and rebellion, and when the ministers were most inadequately paid even their allotted salaries. I may mention, that the college here alluded to, laid the foundation of the present American college of Dartmouth.

Such being a few of the Missionary doings of the Church of Scotland in but *one* period of her history, and that, comparatively speaking, when the parochial economy was strong, surely no imputation can be more ignorant than that the Parochial destroys the

Missionary system. They act most harmoniously together. Indeed I have great doubts whether any Voluntary Church of the same period can appeal to as unequivocal evidence of Missionary zeal as the parochial Church of Scotland.

And now having shewn the original excellence of the parochial economy of our country, both from its own nature, and from the admirable fruits of its operation in successive ages; and having vindicated it also from the unjust charges which are sometimes preferred against it, I must conclude. Very imperfect as the sketch may be which I have presented, there is one thing which I think must be abundantly plain to all who have heard me, and that is, that the Church of Scotland, in every period of her history, and in all circumstances of her condition—when poor and when prosperous—in sunshine, and amid the fires of persecution—in good report and in bad report, has proved herself the staunch and unwearied friend of the best interests of the whole body of the people. Ignorant men, high and low, may say as they have often said, that churchmen are the lovers of darkness—that they hate all improvement—that their craft is of such a nature that it needs the screen and the shelter of ignorance. The persons who entertain and express such sentiments, do indeed presume on the most glorious ignorance on the part of their hearers, and give no slender proofs of their own attainments in the same illustrious science; but as a statement of truth applicable to the church to which I have the honour to be-

long—no representation can be more false or presumptuous. The Church of Scotland, from the first hour of her birth, has consecrated all her strength to the diffusion of sound education and scriptural knowledge. Her very being depends upon the intelligence of her people. *She* has ever gained by the spread of freedom and improvement, and would forfeit a character earned by almost three centuries of heroic labour and unsparing sacrifice, did she now falter in her career.

Having seen what the church of our fathers has done for the moral and religious instruction and amelioration of the people, a serious question arises, and I put to you for a calm and intelligent decision. What should be done with the Church of Scotland? Should she be permitted to enjoy the same public advantages which she has hitherto enjoyed, or should she be stript of them all, and be henceforward debarred from any extension of her Parochial economy by public means? If any one wavers at the question, I ask what mischief has the Church of Scotland wrought? What crime has she committed that you would withdraw her privileges, and brand her as a traitor? Is this the way in which we treat friends,—to forget past services, and without cause stain their memory with suspicion and insult? Had the Church of Scotland abandoned her duty—had she resisted all improvement—had she proved herself the enemy of knowledge—had she accomplished no good, and had those who are so hostile to her national advantages raised up for themselves, and planted in every parish of the

land more numerous, cheaper, more scriptural and efficient schools and churches; then indeed there might have been a show of reason in saying that the powers which had been neglected and abused—the system which had been so completely superseded, should be withdrawn; but when the very opposite of these things is the truth, where can be the wisdom and piety of such a proposal?

To say that the Church of Scotland has not been, in every period of her history, so efficient as she might have been, is to say nothing. I frankly admit it. But what Church or Institution, Voluntary or Established, I would like to know, has enjoyed the envied blessedness of doing all that she might have done, and that in the most perfect manner, for nearly three centuries? Other Churches have scarcely entered upon fields which she has occupied for ages. Are these the parties who are entitled to complain of her inefficiency and of their superior attainments? The Church of Scotland, in spite of all her defects and shortcomings, has been the grand instrument in the hand of Providence of raising our poor rugged country of clouds and of rocks and of heath—of infertile soil and fitful climate—a very corner of Europe—once the mere hunting ground of savages—to the highest name of renown among the nations of Europe, nay, to a fame in all quarters of the world, which the mightiest empires of ancient and modern times, with a profusion of every natural advantage, have been unable to secure; and is

this the parochial system which should be broken up and given to the winds? Is it such an easy thing to grow in knowledge, and virtue, and enterprise, and happiness, and civilization, and true and undefiled religion in this fallen world, that we may pull down the most approved institutions, for any defect, real or imaginary, in the full assurance of being always able, next moment, to substitute something as good, or better, in their room. If the Church of Scotland, with all her defects, has been able to accomplish so much, has she not proved her great capabilities for good? And may we not well ask, how much more will she accomplish when every evil is removed, and every facility afforded for her full and successful extension?

Ah, what would Scotland have been without her parochial institutions—without her schools and her churches, and the zeal and sacrifices of her early clergy in establishing and maintaining them. Struggling with a reluctant Legislature, and unaided by moral and religious means from other quarters, what would she have been but another Ireland,—stained with the blood of successive Popish rebellions—covered with military—jails—police—her children, and poor, and working-classes, universally sunk in the ignorance and degradation in which the lowest ranks of our largest towns are at present involved? Where, then, comparatively speaking, would have been the efficiency of the preaching of the gospel, where that very amount of knowledge which the foes of our parochial

institutions possess, and which they ungratefully employ against the benefactor who conferred it?

Before abandoning the parochial system of Scotland to the rough hands of opponents, our people and our country will naturally and justly ask, what have their hands done for the cause of universal instruction and reformation? what sacrifices have they made? what persecutions have they endured? what history of services can they unfold? to what age and what country can they point for their moral triumphs? and should it turn out that their knowledge is but theory, unsupported by fact, surely the people of Scotland will consider well, before they exchange the experience of centuries for the dream of yesterday.

Whatever, in the course of an all-wise and all-merciful Providence may occur, whatever changes may take place, happily our path of duty is plain and open before us. Though the care and superintendence of the parochial system adds largely to our sphere of labour, and that labour, at the present time, and in populous towns especially, be accompanied with what may almost be called oppression, still following the spirit and the steps of our honoured ancestors, we will continue to be the zealous friends of the young, and the poor, and the forgotten,—the patrons of knowledge and education, and universal moral and religious good: We will hail every favourable omen—we will seize every opportunity of strengthening and extending the parochial system of our beloved land, and when others

become lukewarm friends, or avowed enemies, instead of being discouraged, we will rally more warmly than ever round the time-worn hallowed institutions of our fathers. We will gather up their services from deep and ungrateful oblivion—we will trace anew the glorious characters in the monuments of their history, and pray, and labour, and contribute, that we prove not unworthy of our high descent, and that we dishonour not our noble heraldry.

THE END.

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LECTURE XI.

ON THE CAUSES OF DEPARTURE FROM THE PAROCHIAL ECONOMY, &c.

BEFORE proceeding to discuss the proper subject of this Lecture, which is,—“The causes of departure from the Parochial Economy, and the evils of that departure,” I seem called upon to explain what I understand by that phrase. This explanation was doubtless given fully in the last Lecture, but I myself had not the advantage of hearing it, and probably some of my present audience may be in the same predicament. Now, all reason requires that he who walks forth to detect *false* weights and measures should be furnished with others which *are true*,—a standard must be fixed before we pronounce this or that a deviation,—so, before I proceed to say one word about departures from the parochial economy, let me explain what I understand the parochial economy to be.

Departure implies something *fixed*, with reference to which it is a departure; whether this something be actual or merely imagined is of no consequence. That the parochial system has now, of a long time, been in many places nothing but *an idea*, is admitted,—that it never has been fully or universally realized need not be denied, but these facts furnish additional reasons for keeping it steadily in view; for the degree to which it has *not* been realized is the measure of the inefficiency of the Established Church; that is, (for the terms are convertible,) the measure of the ignorance and ungodliness of the people.

(2.) The founders of our Church, like the Reformers in general, are allowed to have been men of acute and comprehensive intellect; men who had acquired, both from scripture and from actual observation, a profound insight into human nature; who were distinguished for practical sagacity and wisdom no less than for zeal, energy, perseverance, and purity of intention. The suggestions of such men can never be unworthy of attention; and, before we consent to depart from their deliberate judgments, we ought to be sure that the ground on which we proceed is very solid. Three centuries, it is true, have been added to the field of our experience,—and so far we may seem to be more advantageously circumstanced for judging than the Reformers were. But, besides a *field of vision*, something more is required, namely, a *faculty of vision*; and if you reply, that as now there are telescopes for bringing near the distant heavens,

so are there *new lights* for aiding the eye to survey matters pertaining to Religion and the Church, I answer that *all lights* do not enlighten,—some bewilder, some blind,—and, as for modern telescopes, they are useful or the contrary, just as they are used. If one looks through the *right* end they magnify in various degrees, but if any one is so perverse he may look through the *wrong* end, and then they diminish objects in the same proportion.

(3.) The first element of the parochial economy is, that a minister of the gospel should be provided and maintained for every thousand souls, situate within a convenient distance. These souls are his *cure*, his portion of the great wilderness of society, which he must set himself to reclaim and bring under moral tillage,—his *beat*, within which he must go his rounds, and act the spiritual watchman. The Reformers were not enlightened enough to know, that the best arrangement for watching a town was, not to assign a particular district to each watchman, but just to let them parade, each where he chose; for they weakly apprehended, that, under this *casual* system, the splendid streets,—the Moray Places and the Heriot Rows,—would perhaps be watched well enough; but that the poor lanes and closes,—the Canongates and Cowgates,—would be left to watch themselves.

(4.) Besides a minister, the parochial economy demands *elders*, in number proportioned to that of the people,—in zeal and labours proportioned to *their* spiritual necessities,—elders who shall visit and com-

fort the afflicted,—who shall counsel the unruly,—who shall be examples to all,—who shall have each a district or subordinate parish of his own, within which he shall be “ready to every good work,”—and shall form the medium of communication between it and the minister. The elders are the *roots* of the parochial tree, and wherever these roots are few or none, the tree has seldom much hold of the soil, and very rarely bears much fruit.

(5.) The parochial system never can be regarded as complete, without that important functionary—the parish schoolmaster. He is the *pioneer* of the minister,—he is a *layer of foundations*,—he casts down hills, and fills up valleys, and prepares a way in youthful minds, whereon the chariot of the everlasting gospel “may run and be glorified.” But lest the children should learn *one* thing in the school, and *another* in the church, the schoolmaster must be a member of the church. He is the right hand of the minister, and it does not suit when the hand *dissents* from the body.

(6.) The parochial economy is *the method of exhaustion* applied to the Christianizing of a people. By it the whole area of society is filled up with Christian instructors, and Christian ordinances. It is a plan of cultivation, which breaks down the territory into manageable moral *farms*, each of which, being compact and well defined, is committed to one cultivator, and of which he has a liferent, on condition, that he not only sow good seed in the good soil, but drain the marsh, reclaim the moor, clear the forest. This, I sub-

mit, is a more likely method of bringing the whole estate under cultivation, than just to allow each farmer, as he chose, to take in a field here, another there, and a third elsewhere ; for against *this* way of proceeding there lie at least these two insuperable objections :—*First*, Half the time will be wasted in removing the implements of husbandry from one field to another ; and, *Second*, While, by this system of casual cultivation, the *rich* spots may be pretty well tilled, the poorer soils must, to a certainty, be neglected.

(7.) It is easier oft-times, to say what a thing is not, than to define what it is. The parochial economy, then, is not that which assigns to one minister, instead of one or even two thousand people, a large town, or a city for his spiritual cure. It is not that which expects him to instruct and *shepherdize* some five, or ten, or twenty thousand people. It is not that which pursues him with a pack of secular concerns, in full cry at his heels, from the time he *breaks cover* on Monday morning, over the whole week, till he *earths* himself near the end of it, much better prepared to rest than to commence a hard run of preparation for the fast approaching Sunday. The parochial economy is not that which sends a minister to hunt out his people over the wilderness of a great city, finding two in one street, one in another, and missing as many of them as he finds. It is not a system under which the minister is as unknown in what is called “his parish,” as he is in any other of the so-called “parishes” of the city wherein he dwells. The parochial system is not

that which has no elders, or few,—and these merely appearing in that character on the Lord's Day. The parochial economy is not *there* established where parish schools are not, through want of which, the children of the poor are suffered to grow up, destitute of the most necessary knowledge even for the life that now is; ignorant of God and of themselves; to become, every successive generation of them, more and more children of the devil. The phrase, "parochial economy," may, to some minds, suggest *saving*, and *reduction*, and *cheapness*; and that there is *true* and *great economy* in the system, even in this sense of the word, I firmly believe; but it is that wise economy which sees "the end from the beginning," and not that *paltry thrift* which saves a *penny* from the education of the child, to incur, by and by, a *pound* for his restraint, or his punishment.

(8.) Allow me to conclude these introductory observations with a story, and whether it be a fable or a fact, you will probably discover before I have done telling it. A certain person came, in the ups and downs of fortune, into possession of a large tract of uncultivated land, situate near the ocean. Bethinking him how best he might improve it, he was advised to divide the land into as many farms as there were thousands of acres, and on each of these farms to erect a farm-house, with all other necessary offices; and, in short, to *stock* the farms; for the persons who were to occupy them, though skilful enough in the arts of husbandry, possessed, most of them, no capital of their

own. He followed the advice, and the scheme succeeded to a miracle; for over the whole estate there was, in a short time, not a patch of uncultivated land to be seen, and the crops in general were so excellent and abundant, that the estate began to be talked of all over the country.

But it came to pass, that, by degrees, and almost imperceptibly, the ocean retiring, left another tract of land, larger than the former. This was useless and worse. It produced nothing but weeds and pestilence. And though farmers who came there of their own accord, and who, for that reason, as also because they derived no pecuniary assistance from the landlord,—though they often did from his tenants,—called themselves *Voluntaries*; though these farmers had settled on the *richer spots*, which they cultivated as well as their want of capital would allow, yet, instead of overtaking *those* tracts which produced the weeds and the pestilence, these were encreasing steadily and rapidly, so that the proprietor began to be seriously alarmed for the safety of his estate.

In his perplexity, he was advised to adopt, with respect to this *new* land, the same means which had succeeded so well with the *old*,—to set to work, and build a farm-house, offices, &c., for every thousand acres, (for these Voluntary farmers, whatever they might pretend, wanted capital for draining marshes, and reclaiming moors,) and though the expense to the proprietor would be something in the meantime, it would turn out, *in the end*, a most profitable speculation.

But here all the Voluntary farmers, aided by their farm servants, whose heads they had taken great pains to fill with their own ridiculous notions, raised a fierce clamour against the old tenants who advised the proprietor to adopt the course here spoken of; representing to those poor people, that the proposed scheme “would very considerably increase their taxes,” though they themselves, in the meantime, knew quite well that it would not cost each person one-fourth part of a farthing in the year, and denouncing the proposal, as designed not so much to reclaim the waste land as to injure, or ruin, or expel them, the Voluntary cultivators. “Gentlemen,” says the landlord, “I do not see what reason you have to make all this ado. My object in building new farm-steadings, is not to injure you,—who used to be very peaceable people, though some of you lately have been coming rather too near Will Shakespeare’s description,*—but merely to improve the estate, which you cannot but perceive, is got into a most shocking condition. You have had full one hundred years to put your new principle of farming to the proof, and the quantity of uncultivated land is encreasing on our hands year after year. I break no faith with you. When did I give you to understand I should stock no other farms? But do you really suppose, that just to please your humour, I am going to

* “Rash, inconsiderate, fiery Voluntaries,
With ladies’ faces, and fierce dragon’s spleens.”

KING JOHN, ii. 1.

let matters proceed, till the estate is ruined past redemption? You yourselves confess, that in one district of country, there are *fifty thousand* acres untilled, lying in a state far worse than useless. How comes this to pass, under the full operation of your all-sufficient principle of farming? You have had plenty of time,—you are full of praises of your own diligence. If, therefore, *you* are not deficient, *your system is*, and so I must even betake me to the old method.”

II. The parochial arrangement, as actually settled at the Reformation, was certainly most excellent in the then existing circumstances of the country. It is not to be disguised, however, that it resembled not the skin, which expands and increases with the expansion and increase of the body, but rather the *shell* of the crustacea, which, however admirably it may answer its purpose for the time, is fixed and rigid, and when the body becomes *shell-bound*, must be cast off. We cannot therefore defend the Reformers against the charge of wanting the gift of prescience. They certainly did not foresee the present increase of the population,—they did not anticipate the springing of large towns out of paltry villages,—or if they did, they gave their successors credit for that wisdom, zeal, and influence, which might adapt the institution gradually, to the gradually changing circumstances of the people. The works of man bear the stamp of his own ignorance and imperfection, from which, those of the wisest and greatest are by no means exempt. Every ma-

chine of human contrivance, after a time, goes wrong; it needs cleansing and repair, or even remodelling. It is the distinction of the works of God, to possess within themselves, an apparatus of adjustment, as well as of reproduction and indefinite continuance.

(2.) When we speak of "departure from the parochial economy," our language must not be understood as indicating any actual or active interference for the purpose of *deranging that economy*; but rather the *want of* such interference; not so much (to resume our crustaceous illustration) that the shell has been altered so as to pinch and incommode the body, as that the old shell has, to the great inconvenience and hurt of the animal, been *retained*, instead of being *cast*, and succeeded by another and a much larger, as it ought long ago to have been. The parochial economy has been departed from, not by departing from the *actual arrangements* of the Reformers, but rather by too faithfully and implicitly adhering to them,—by observing too much the letter of their regulations, and too little their spirit.

(3.) The principal causes of departure from the parochial economy, and those which have occasioned most of the others are, the increase of the population and its transference from one place to another.

In the course of the two or three centuries during which our church has been established, populous villages have sprung up in rural parishes. The parish church was too small to accommodate the inhabitants, (the distinguished patriotism and Christian liberality of

the Scottish proprietors having taken means to prevent it growing with their growth) or, if not too small, it was too distant. And the same cause which hindered the people attending the parish church, hindered the parish minister visiting the people, at least so frequently as their interests and his duty required; and they strayed, in consequence, "as sheep who have no shepherd."

At the period when many of our parish churches were erected, the population of the parish was concentrated in one corner of it, and there, naturally, the church was placed; or to save expense, the site of a former building was retained, while in the meantime the population was being drained off to another corner; and thus both church and minister became almost useless to the great majority of the parishioners. In some cases, indeed, the evil here spoken of has been in part remedied by the neighbourhood of a church (without the bounds of their own parish,) in which the people found accommodation. This state of things, though the best which the circumstances of the case admit, has virtually introduced the congregational system into many country parishes, with all the inconveniences and disadvantages which are inseparable from that system.

To exemplify these statements. Hard by the church of Kirkden, (in the county of Forfar) stands the village of Letham, situate within another parish. Then within the parish of Kirkden, *five miles* distant from the church, is the village of Froickheim,

which stands only about a mile from the church of Kinnel, and little more from that Guthrie, within which churches the people of that village, so many of them as could find room, have been in the habit of attending divine service. Belonging to the parish of Guthrie, again, is a district separated by the space of seven long miles from the parish church, which, therefore the people residing in that district cannot, on ordinary occasions, be expected to attend.

(4.) The mischiefs of this deranged state of things are manifold and obvious. The visits of the parish minister to his distant parishioners, must have at least these *two* qualities of angels' visits,—“short and few.” The length of the way consumes both time and strength. Arrived at the scene of his labour, he is less prepared to labour than to rest; and when his duty is done, and his second or homeward journey accomplished, sloth and his wife seem to have the best of the argument, when they maintain that he will speedily end his days unless his visits to his outfield farm be shorter and less frequent than heretofore,—though conscience, who defends the other side of the controversy, is very positive, they are, if not *shorter*, at least less frequent than they ought to be. In the circumstances here described there is a waste of labour and of time on the part of the minister, and as a consequence the people receive greatly less attention than they would otherwise do. For though it is remarked that sometimes those hearers who come the farthest appear the earliest at the church door on Sunday mornings, yet I have never heard it

remarked of *the minister* that he appeared either earliest or oftenest at the most distant dwellings in his parish.

As this state of matters occasions clerical inefficiency, so does it breed confusion. The people attend the ministry of *one* man, and *another* man is their minister. One man instructs, and (if they are examined) another man examines them, and dispenses the ordinances of religion to them and to their children. In short, (as saith the scripture) “one man soweth and another reapeth.” Now it is not understood that the *waygoing crop* is generally either taken so much pains with, or proves so productive as when the farmer knows it shall fill his own barns and his own coffers.

(5.) My text confines me to the “*causes and evils* of departure from the parochial economy.” That is, (to speak medically) I have the *Pathology* of the system for my subject. My successor is to enjoy the pleasure of prescribing “the treatment and cure” of the diseases which I am doomed to prob and expose. Now, you will allow, it is rather a hard case, that one surgeon should have all the *disagreeable duty* imposed on him of telling the patient all about the virulence and magnitude of his disorder, the danger of his present condition, and the vices which have occasioned it, while another surgeon should have all the *pleasant duty* of explaining how this great and virulent disorder may be cured. Therefore, with your leave, I will for a moment overleap the hedge of my proper subject to

remark, that, as the parochial economy has been lost sight of, in many parts of the country, by keeping the bounds of the parishes too distinctly in view, so the natural method of securing the former is to neglect the latter. Let presbyteries be empowered to assign to each minister such a population for his spiritual cure as lies most convenient for him, whether it be situate within the bounds of his territorial parish or not. Thus shall we economize the time of ministers and their labour, that both may be applied with greater effect. No longer shall a clergyman spend a day walking some ten or twelve miles to visit a sick person or to baptize a child, who has a whole village at his door much needing his spiritual labours, and among whose ignorant and godless families he might, to good purpose, have spent the hours which have been wasted in dreary travel ; but now I must walk some half-dozen miles to visit a cottage within the shadow of my neighbour's manse ; and he must do the same with respect to another family equally distant from him, and equally near his neighbouring minister ; and all because certain men some centuries ago pronounced the words—" hitherto shalt thou come but no farther ;" and as if the church were barred for ever and ever by that fiat, as the waves of the ocean by the decree of God, " fixing its bounds that it cannot pass."

Another pernicious anomaly of a kindred sort deserves notice. One man has assigned him a *country-side*, which is called *his parish* ; but to manage which, to instruct the ignorant, visit the sick, reprove the

irregular, keep up a friendly and familiar intercourse with all,—some thousands, perhaps, in number, and scattered over so wide a space,—would require, not the legs of a man to carry him, nor yet of a horse, but the wings of the condor or the albatross;* while an adjoining minister sits quietly in a contracted nook, with a population amounting to some one or two hundred.

Against the existence of such *light* parishes nothing need be said, unless there were others at hand intolerably heavy, of which the ministers are apt to cry out with Moses: “Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me; and if thou thus deal with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, and let me not see my wretchedness.” (Numb. xi.) And surely such overburdened pastor may *reasonably* com-

* One is here reminded of Homer’s confession of his inability to enumerate the individuals of the Graecian host:—

πληθὺν δ’ οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ μύθησομαι οὐδ’ ὀνομηνῶ,
οὐδ’ εἰ μοι δέκα μὲν γλώσσαι, δέκα δὲ στόματ’ εἴην,
φῶνῃ δ’ ἄρρηκτος, χαλκεὼν δὲ μοι ἦτορ ἐνείη.

Which words an overburdened parish minister might thus paraphrase:—

“So multitudinous are my parishioners,
That each to catechize, instruct, exhort,
Ten mouths, ten tongues,—an everlasting voice,
And breast of adamant, would scarce suffice.”

plain to the Church, as Martha *unreasonably* complained to our Lord: "Dost thou not care that my brother hath left me to serve alone? bid him, therefore, that he help me." (Luke x.)

(6.) The causes which have occasioned partial departures from the parochial economy in the country have operated also in the case of towns, and in these on a far larger scale, and with more pernicious effect. The increase of the whole population has been its increase *in towns*; for there seems no reason to doubt that the *rural* population has steadily diminished with the improved methods of agriculture, the extension of manufactures, and the abandonment of the *cottar* system. The larger the towns the more rapid seems to have been their increase up to a certain point; wherein they are proved to obey that general law, that "the attractions of bodies are directly as their masses." Perhaps the other part of the law of attraction—its being inversely as the square of the distance—may hold also in the case of towns, only to demonstrate this point would require a more refined calculus than most persons have the use of.

As towns increased no effectual or sufficient means were taken to forestall the spiritual wants of the people. The Church was *stereotyped*, perfect, immaculate,—to admit no enlargement, no appendix, no second and more perfect edition. A suit of clothes was made, of ever-enduring materials, which indeed fitted the child to admiration, but those who made it had no suspicion that the child should ever grow to

the dimensions of a man, much less of a giant,—or they could command no more cloth, and so left the duty of enlargement to those who should come after them;—hoping, perhaps, that in time some way might be discovered of opening the fast-locked chest of avarice, or that, with a view to his own advantage, if for no higher reason, “the churl might become liberal.”

A country parish is situate in the vicinity of a large and encreasing town. It is very manageable so long as the soil is occupied by trees and green fields, with farm *towns* and clusters of cottages scattered over its surface. But gradually houses and then streets supplant the trees and pastures; the parish swarms with human life; and still the one parish church remains, and the one parish minister, and the one parish school—“but what are they among so many?” Five loaves and two fishes may suffice for the twelve disciples; but if, at any time, they feed “five thousand men, besides women and children,” He must pronounce the blessing who can walk upon the sea, and can hush the winds by a word, “Be still,” and whom men may fall down to worship, (without idolatry,) saying: “Thou art of a truth the Son of God.”

(7.) Things have proceeded in this course, till now one feels almost ashamed to say he is over-burdened with a parish containing only some four or five thousand souls; for here is one minister who tells you of his, which is twice as large, and there is another who can shut your mouth with his, which is four times larger. Some of the rustic brethren complain, very

unjustly, I believe, that town ministers, forgetful of the true Presbyterian parity, manifest, some of them, a disposition to *Episcopize*, nay even to *Archbishopize*. If it were so, which it is not, want of *time* being mistaken for want of humility, it would not be very wonderful. Call a region containing some thirty or forty thousand people, by what other name you please—call it a *diocese*—call it an Arch-Episcopal see—call it a patriarchate—but call it not a *parish*. For this word (unless I have quite forgotten my little Greek) signifies *a neighbourhood*; such a neighbourhood, that one man can know familiarly all persons residing within it; such a neighbourhood, that one minister can conveniently visit all the families within its bounds every year, can catechize all the young; in short, such a neighbourhood, of which he can be the *curé*, taking the oversight of it, and truly therefore, performing the office of its *Bishop*, and yet have some time left for reading his Bible—some time for preserving and improving his acquaintance with the languages in which it was originally written—some time for meditation—some for prayer—some leisure to turn the key of his book-case, and not suffer the worms *exclusively* to feed and revel on the pages of his learned tomes—that his ear shall not be ever so filled and stunned with the noises of living men, as to be rendered incapable of catching those low but sweet, those sage and solemn sounds, which the voices of the dead utter, and which, even “he that hath an ear” cannot hear, unless he can listen in repose and silence; that his sermons shall not be a skimming of such thoughts

as the fermentation of his mind chances to have thrown to the surface, but shall be the result of his calm deliberate meditations, with much pains matured, and watered with many prayers.

(8.) Whoever may minister to the people residing in a district including some twenty or thirty, or even some five or six thousand souls, the individual styled "the minister of the parish," cannot be the minister, except to a very few of them, and to these, by reason of the variety of his engagements, very imperfectly. He is indeed the minister who takes care of paupers, who has the toil and annoyance of sending off lunatics to places of confinement, who judges who are poor, and what aliment they shall receive—who helps the poor in their thousand *temporal* difficulties, whomsoever they may choose to help them in their *spiritual*. "He is the minister," as Dr Chalmers has truly described him, "who is the organ of many a communication between his people and the offices in London, and many a weary signature is exacted from him, and a world of management is devolved upon his shoulders, and instead of sitting, like his fathers in office, surrounded by the Theology of the present and other days, he must now turn his study into a counting-room, and have his well-arranged cabinet before him, fitted up with its sections and its other conveniences, for notices and duplicates, and all the scraps and memoranda of a manifold correspondence."*

* Civ. Economy, Vol. I. p. 33.

(9.) Such a manner of life—and it is the life of every minister of an overgrown parish—tends powerfully to destroy every thing like learning in the clergy who are subjected to it. To encrease one's knowledge is out of the question. One feels it impossible to keep up even what little may have been formerly possessed. Nay, that lowest consolation is denied to some, leisure *to take stock*, for the purpose of discerning how much hath been lost in trade; “and all taking out, and no putting in, soon comes to the bottom of the meal-tub,” as Poor Richard says. As to spirituality of mind, on which so much of the efficacy of ministerial duty depends, this kind of distracted life keeps up a most assiduous and successful war against it; for he that hath his hands full of the world, shall hardly keep his heart empty of it; *secularities*, and *secularity*, if they are not one flesh, yet certainly there exists such a *liaison* between the parties, that conscience must act the part of guardian with uncommon watchfulness, if he prevent them forming an alliance not the less binding, because clandestinely solemnized, without any proclamation of bans. He that is almost never alone, runs an awful risk of forgetting that he *is* never alone.

Besides, of all things, the most depressing is the prospect of *an endless labour*—the knowledge, that do what one will, not more than a small fraction of what should be done, can be accomplished. The certainty that we cannot do all *we ought*, generally hinders us doing all *we might*. Those who imagine

a person will do more, the more he has got to do, have surely forgotten whether they sooner felt tired walking on a straight road, or on a crooked one. "The very visability of the limit, by leading a minister to perceive the length and breadth of his task, holds out an inducement to his energies, which, however difficult to explain, will be powerfully felt and proceeded on. There is a very great difference, in respect of its practical influence, between a task that is indefinite, and a task that is clearly seen to be overtakable. The one has the effect to paralyze, the other to quicken exertion."* So that the very circumstances which require redoubled energy and exertion from a minister, tend to dispirit and weaken him.

Nor is it to be disguised, that an indolent man finds, in the largeness of his parish, a plausible apology for his indolence, out of which he must be shamed had he only one or two thousand people for his spiritual cure. It is dangerous for some men to be left with little but the voice of conscience to urge them on in the way of their duty. That is a rare tree which will grow by itself on an open plain, and unsheltered by other trees. The principle of grace must have considerable growth, before it will flourish independent entirely of all subordinate motives. It is, at least, unwise so to expose it. The chief rulers are not condemned, because they

* Dr Chalmers' Civil Economy, vol. I., is *the work* on the principle of locality, as applied to the religious improvement of great towns. It is the only book on the subject, (so far as I know,) and certainly there is no need of a second.

had some respect for the good opinion of their countrymen, but for exalting it so out of its place, that “they loved the praise of men *more* than the praise of God.”

(10.) The very measures apparently adopted for preserving the parochial economy, have, in some instances, proved the occasion of its derangement. One of the most pernicious abuses connected with our Ecclesiastical Establishment, is *private property in Churches*. Wherever this obtains, *seat-rents* are a necessary consequence, and these not regulated according to any general or moderated scale, to suit the ability of the parishioners to pay them; but each private proprietor exercises his right to do what he will with his own, *i. e.*, to get as much for it as he is able. Thus, though the erection of the Church, and the stipend of the minister, may be, in the first instance, provided for, after the manner of an Established Church, yet the people have *both* supplied to them on the *mercantile* system; in other words, the holder of private property in the Church, calculating what amount of stipend his property is charged withal, and what sum it originally cost him, expects a return in shape of seat rents, which may cover the first, together with the interest of the second. Incurable evils are the worst, and this seems an incurable evil.

(11.) The economy, or rather parsimony,—for it is bad economy,—of public bodies, has brought matters to the same unfortunate pass in most of our great towns. The object at which these bodies have aimed,

has apparently been to make the churches, of which they are heritors, support themselves. Now nothing is more certain than this, that a self-supported church, a church which is a *paying concern*, is not one into which the poor man and his family can find admittance. The church that shall *pay*, must be occupied by those who can afford to pay high seat rents; and if the seat rents be cheap, the concern *cannot pay*. Of such *mercantile churches*, as I have said before, even so say I now again, that Mammon is the door-keeper, and suffers none to enter, (or few,) till he feels the pressure of their silver or their gold, upon "his itching palm." And while the appearance of a church, provided by the public, might seem to suggest, "to the poor the gospel is preached," Mammon speedily corrects that impression. He standeth and crieth aloud, "to the rich, the gospel is preached." And should any luckless wight have entered, who wants the "gold ring," and "the goodly apparel," he is sternly ordered, "stand thou there," or "sit thou here, on my footstool;" or Mammon finds him and questions him, "What hast *thou* to do to tread *my* courts?" The poor man replies, "He thought the church had been built for the use of the people in the parish, out of regard and tender mercy to their souls." "Oh thou simple fool," Mammon replies, "the church has been built, it is true; out of tender mercy, if thou wilt; but the tender mercy *must be repaid*. The church must prove a good concern,—it must not drain the city funds. It is very good to be merciful, but

economy must *first* be attended to. I am a strenuous advocate for charity and mercy myself," says Mammon, "but I always see that they cost nothing, or as little as possible."

A church is built in a destitute corner of a great town—a minister is appointed. These are the parish church and the parish minister. But this provision might almost as well not be made, unless the sittings in the church be let at such rates which the people residing within the parish or district are able to pay. If the seat rents are above the ability of the people,—which in most town churches they are,—then the church, if it be occupied at all, must be occupied by wealthier persons drawn from all quarters; that is, the congregational system,—that mother of confusion and inefficiency,—must take place of the parochial; and the church which should have proved a fold in which "the poor and the rich might meet together, the Lord being the maker of them all," becomes a place in which the rich, the noble, the fashionable may "assemble and meet together;" and the clergyman would leave almost none of his congregation unaddressed, if, instead of "Dearly Beloved Brethren," he should commence with that ordinary platform compellation, "Ladies and Gentlemen." The poorer parishioners, in the mean time, must either seek the ordinances of religion where they can find them at a cheaper rate, or "the high seat rents in the parish church" may form a *salvo*, which that experienced practitioner, the devil, skillfully and delicately applies to heal the consciences,

wounded by sabbaths profaned, and ordinances neglected.

(12.) "Such destitute persons," we may be told, "can resort to Dissenting places of worship, in many of which, there is no want of room, and, *of course*, cheap sittings. And certainly it were infinitely better they should be proselyted to any sect which holds the Head, than left to join themselves to that 'synagogue of Satan,' which 'denies the only God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.' Better they should become Papists, than infidels practical or avowed. But surely *they* do ask more than most men will grant, who require them first to change their religious opinions, and, at this price, purchase admission to some place of worship in which the newly embraced opinions are taught. No; if men are to be reclaimed to Christianity, they must be reclaimed *to that fold* of the Church from which they strayed. If they must be retained *in* the Church they must be retained *there*. The great body of the really poor in this country, (as in most others,) profess to belong to the Established Church, and therefore it is surely reasonable that they be provided with means of grace *within that church* to which they profess their adherence. "Stand ye in the ways and see,"—and lest they should fear danger on a road unknown, it is added for their encouragement, "Ask for the *old paths*, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."—Jer. vi. And if any shall assert that the whole Catholic

Church is but one great fleet, which the Lord High Admiral hath commissioned to transport men's souls from earth to heaven, and that all the various sects are but the several ships of that fleet, then, surely it were best to allow each vessel to retain her own complement of passengers, at least so many of them as are willing to keep by her during the rest of the voyage, and to allow her quietly to send out her own boats to save those of her people that have unfortunately dropped overboard. For if you attempt to shift them from one ship to another, in this heavy sea, many will certainly be drowned. Let all the different vessels, therefore, as many as are sea-worthy, instead of running foul in this preposterous fashion, as if they were not all steering one course,—instead of pouring broadsides into each other, as if they did not all sail under the same flag, rather unite in taking off the poor creatures that still hang by the rigging of that huge old waterlogged three-decker, the Church of Rome; as well as in picking up the multitudes of wretched souls all around, that are swimming and struggling to keep themselves above water for a little, but who must presently sink and “rise not again till the heavens be no more, and the sea shall give up its dead.” I cannot help thinking the course here recommended more likely to secure the approbation of Him by whom this fleet hath been commissioned, than our hindering the voyage, and setting the ships on fire, all through a quarrel as to whether the pay of the captains shall be raised from a tax on all hands, or only

by those who choose contributing for that purpose. If this dispute *must* be settled, it were surely at least as well to wait till the sea be calm, and the enemy be out of sight.

(13.) The appetite that craves high seat rents craves them from what quarter soever they may come. It asks not Who within the parish is hungry? but Who anywhere is rich, and will buy? Accordingly, in towns the sittings in churches have commonly been let to all persons, without distinction or preference of parishioners before others. Instead of the people being induced to worship in their own parish churches, by their possessing a prior claim to sittings there, as well as by a reduction upon the seat rents, they have often been expelled from them, by a confluence of persons from all quarters, who could pay, or had got the start of them.

Thus, let me here observe, has a state of things been brought about, worse than even the purely *congregational* itself; for the minister is, at the same time, burdened with a parish, and, apart from this, with a congregation also. Without tautology, therefore, may he speak of his “parish and congregation,” for they are two distinct and different things. His parish he must attend to—his congregation he ought not to neglect. The first should be done, the second should not be left undone. Now, when two things demand attention at once, neither is apt to be well attended to. If *you* call to me, “Go to the right,” and *you*, “Go to the left,” I am apt to lose my time

considering, doubting, hesitating, to which hand I ought to turn.

(14.) In different towns statements have been put forth, professing to show *how much* the Established Church costs the community. These have been met by counter-statements, *how little* that Establishment costs. A sad pass things are come to, when institutions are laid in the balances and found wanting if the creditor side of the account proves lighter by some farthings than the debtor. For the sake of the character of the authors, I hope the latter statements are the more correct. In other words, I would rather find that sophistry had been used to prop a bad cause than to injure a good one ; for the sake of the community, and the credit of their rulers, I would prefer that the *former* were so ; for if the religious education of the people does not cost the community a large sum, all experience demonstrates that that education *must* be neglected. It may cost much and *yet be neglected*, but if it costs little or nothing it *must* be so. And statements how lightly the Established Church, with its accompanying parish schools, presses on the neck of the public, are but so many witnesses brought forward to convict the public of gross omission in one of its most indispensable and momentous duties. This is as if a guardian should defend himself against a charge of squandering his ward's property, by proving that though a most liberal expense had been incurred in providing *birch* for his chastisement, and a *black-hole* for his confinement, what time he

became unmanageable, yet such laudible economy had been practised in the article of *education* that the youth had grown up ignorant of the commonest and most necessary things, and so was qualified neither to act his part in the great world, nor to use, in a rational manner, the property which had been so judiciously hoarded for him.

When public bodies have aimed at making the Church Establishment, as much as might be, maintain itself, they have forgotten that, in so doing, they withdrew the benefit of it from *that class* of people for whom the institution is chiefly intended. It gives one pleasure to hear of seat rents so greatly reduced in the churches of this city, (or in some of them,) as to be available by almost the poorest of the people. It would be well if matters had been so always, or were so now everywhere, yet would I presume, in my ignorance, to ask a question or two connected with this matter: Whether the seat rents have been reduced *because* the churches in which they are were badly attended, or for some better reason? Whether the sittings, or a certain proportion of them, have been reduced in the city churches *generally*,—in those that are crowded as well as in those that are comparatively empty? Whether the parishioners have a uniform *preference* in the letting of seats? and whether a reduction be allowed to them? These questions are put, *bona fide*, in ignorance of the particular facts referred to; for elsewhere, I know, under the Voluntary system,

both within the Establishment and without,

“Extra et Iliacos muros peccatur et intra,”

so long as sittings are in *no* demand they may be had as low as may be, yea, even for nothing at all; but within the same four walls let a preacher be settled who has the talent of collecting a crowd,—a talent of vast importance and estimation under the Voluntary system, whether without the Established Church or within,—and then shall the seat rents, formerly as low as nothing, mount and mount, as if under the hammer of the auctioneer, till the poor man shakes his head, and dares not adventure another *bid*; and, to his great chagrin, he discovers that the civil door-keeper, who used gladly to accommodate him with a seat in consideration of “his collection,” and who, he always supposed, was called *Charity* or *Mercy*, or some such name, is, after all, no other than Mammon himself, who, in his low estate, had put on Charity’s clothes for a disguise.

Within the last four-and-twenty hours a story was told me, hardly credible I thought it,—however I will tell it you, at least in substance. Perhaps you may judge it not altogether impertinent to the subject now in hand.

The inhabitants of a certain country were afflicted with a very dangerous malady, which had this singular symptom, that persons seized with it felt a great indisposition to be cured, wherefore the doctors called it “*morbis amabilis*,” or the pleasing sickness. Now

the government, perceiving the ravages which this disorder made among the people, and that they could not be trusted to provide medical aid for themselves,—the malady having a most seducing pleasantness for the patient,—proceeded, like true patriots as they were, to organize an institution at the public expense, for seeking out those who had got “the pleasing sickness,” and if possible curing them. In short this institution was somewhat of the nature of a *Board of Health*,—only there were several weighty reasons shewing the necessity of the former which cannot be urged for the latter. Now here comes the part of the story which I can hardly bring myself to believe. In one of the most refined and intelligent cities of that country, whose latitude and longitude I omitted to mention, the civic authorities so wonderfully lost sight of the important purpose which that institution was intended to serve—namely, the curing of those sick of the *morbis amabilis*, that the chief object with them was to make the institution support itself. Nay, my informant told me, that at a time when thousands of citizens were labouring under “the pleasing sickness” and dying with it daily in great numbers, the civic rulers, instead of extending the institution to meet the necessities of the inhabitants, had actually contrived to gain by it a large sum,—some seventy thousand pounds, if I mistake not,—which they had applied in paving the streets, in lighting and adorning them in a most splendid manner, and all that the poor diseased people might promenade with the greater comfort. In short, the grand

object had become to adorn and beautify "a city of the plague." And so perverted had the public notions become, that those persons were extolled as *patriots*, who thought it better to apply the public money in *beautifying the city than in curing the inhabitants*. My informant admitted, indeed, that all the surgeons connected with the institution were not so diligent as possible, for some were old, but then the most of them were zealous and active in a high degree, while some displayed an energy and devotedness in their profession which left them hardly a moment's repose week after week, and month after month. So much for the story. Now to proceed with our subject.

(15.) A tendency in human nature, which it is much easier to blame than to correct, which exists every where, but in large towns alone, finds room to develop itself,—has operated extensively in deranging the parochial economy. This tendency is most apparent among the more educated and intellectual classes of the religious community. As there is not one word which describes this mental disease, you will perhaps excuse me if I invent a name for it, *Itching-earishness*,—a propensity to relish a new voice, a new manner and style, and to nauseate those that are old and familiar, *because* they are old and familiar. The subjects of this mania don't care for the preaching of the *gospel*, but merely for the *preaching* of certain individuals, and this during a certain period. They excuse the *truths* for the *manner*, instead of excusing the *manner* for the *truths*. They think, perhaps, they are seeking

“*instruction* in righteousness,” while they are only seeking excitement and novelty. They often flatter themselves they are receiving “the truth in the love of *it* that they may be saved,” while they are but receiving the eloquence of the preacher in the admiration of *it*, that they may be gratified. In short, to use the pungent expression of our Lord, “they savour not the things that be of God but those that be of men.”

And hence, in large towns, we find solid and excellent preachers of the gospel comparatively deserted after a few years of popularity, as if the good wine of their doctrine had grown sour instead of waxing ripe and mellow with age. And we find the *refugees* crowding the church of some new star, destined in turn to be eclipsed by some newer, and so set in obscurity before his natural setting under the horizon of the earth. And the crowds of *foreigners* expel the natives, as the Saxons drove back the Britons to take shelter among the cold Welch mountains; the parishioners are driven out by the extra-parishioners,—but are not so easily driven in again. The one is a most easy enterprise, the other a most difficult. Like doves, they shall fly to their windows so long as they find good food and good shelter there, with none to fray them away. But let them be once fairly dislodged,—once let the *expulsory* system be put in force against them, whether by high seat rents or by crowds of strangers usurping their places, and he must paint his windows in bright colours who shall entice them back.

Thus, because many have “itching-ears” and heavy

purses, are many others, who are free from both, debarred from hearing the gospel there where they ought, and where they wish to hear it, and the parochial economy is, to that extent, deranged.

(16.) The practice of retaining large towns under the form of one parish, and under the management of one session, has contributed very much to subvert the parochial system, or rather to prevent its taking root. For though, in such cases, the towns were, or are divided into *districts*, yet these were not *bona fide parishes*. They had not each an independent session and distinct parochial management; and the minister, to whom a district was assigned, had not that strict connection with it, nor that undivided interest in it which he would have had, if it had been as truly "his parish," as that of a country minister is his. The bonds of locality were thus loosened, and whatever detaches a minister from a locality, and sets his labours afloat among the general population, paralyzes the right hand of his usefulness, for "locality is the secret principle wherein our great strength lieth."

(17.) The manner in which the labours of chapel ministers were formerly applied, whether or not a crime against the constitution of the Church, I do not presume to decide; but you will perhaps concur with me in thinking, that their being set adrift among the general population of a parish, instead of having each a distinct corner of it to himself, was less a crime against any ecclesiastical law, than a blunder against common sense. For, let us imagine a parish, contain-

ing some six or seven thousand people. There is one Parish Church, and one Chapel of Ease. The regulations of the chapel direct that the minister shall visit and dispense Christian ordinances to all such persons, residing within the parish, as attend his ministry. The parish minister, of course, has all the *heathenism* of the parish thrown on him ; which burden, if he attempt to bear, he must indeed “ groan and sweat under a weary life.” But the greater probability is, that, as the chapel minister attends to *his* hearers, so the parish minister shall also attend only to his, and thus both shall become mere pastors of congregations ; the heathens, in the meantime, who most need attention, the aged, the poor, whom want of suitable clothing, and high seat rents, keep away from church, shall be, in a great measure, overlooked, and, in short, the whole outfield population be left “ to bring forth thorns and briers, being near unto cursing, whose end is to be burned,”—as if the Church had forgotten that her business is to imitate Him who came “ to seek and to save that which was lost,” and had presumed instead, to take up the judgment of God and say, “ He that is unjust let him be unjust still, and he that is filthy let him be filthy still.”

With little more labour to each minister, simply by dividing the parish into two parts, and defining the portion which each had to cultivate, would the work be done far more effectually, both as respects those without the Church, and those within it. For what is everybody's business is nobody's business. The story

of Roland Hill and his maids, none of whom would do a certain piece of work, because it happened to belong to them all, and which, therefore, that eccentric gentleman proceeded to execute himself, conveys a most important lesson, and one which ought never to be overlooked. The evangelization of men is, like other things, the result of means, and to apply the most effectual means for promoting that great end, in the most effectual manner, is one of the highest exercises of Christian wisdom and zeal. Shall we neglect in this, a principle, which is essential to success in every other enterprize, namely, the assigning to each labourer a certain definite piece of work, instead of permitting him to dissipate his energies in scattered and random efforts? When was ever a *common* cultivated? Its furze was not uprooted, its bare pastures were not broken up, its wide extent enclosed, its soil did never teem with grain, till it had *ceased to be common*,—till each individual had got *his own portion*, on which, having bestowed his labours, he expects himself to reap the fruit.

(18.) Perhaps some may here feel disposed to object:—"The causes you have specified do not now exist in many instances where yet there is no parochial paradise." I answer: It is hard to regain possession of paradise after man has once been subjected to *expulsion*, and after a flood of neglects and mismanagement, has left little of paradise but the place where it stood. If the causes which have deranged the parochial economy in great towns, be any of them removed,—if they are in the way of being

corrected, let us rejoice in the fact,—let us commend those who are the instruments,—let us bless God who is the author of this as of all good ; but let us not suppose that the effect will expire with the cause. Our offspring are not intended to be buried in our own graves, else where were the successions of nature ? Evil, especially, is both lamentably fruitful, and hath wonderful power of perpetuation. Adam sins,—we die. “Men’s evil manners live in brass.” The profligate hath not mended his broken fortunes the moment he hath ceased to be profligate. Therefore, the inspired prophet, while he takes from us the poison with one hand, is careful to present the antidote with the other, commanding us, not only “cease to do evil,” but also “learn to do well.”

(19.) The deplorable situation of all our large towns—for they appear all of them to be much in the same condition, as respects the majority of the labouring population—is to be accounted for by reference to the sad neglect of that parochial economy which still maintains, to a great extent, its sway in the country parishes. Regarding *it*, as regarding the Established Church itself, we may safely appeal to every candid observer, whether there be not over this country generally, a remarkable proportion between the degree to which it prevails, and the morality and decency of the population ; and whether all that is most abandoned in the habits of the people do not appear most in those very situations in which the parochial economy has been most completely obliterated ? The cure is to be sought

in pursuing a course the opposite of that which hath occasioned the disease. John Wesley wondered how any man could undertake to superintend the spiritual state of even a *hundred persons*. Surely, then, that pastor who is appointed to tend one or two thousand can enjoy no sinecure, without grossly playing “the hireling who careth not for the sheep.” The children of that population will afford ample materials to occupy the labours of the parish schoolmaster, whose duty it is not only to instruct the young in the rudements of useful learning, but also, and especially in “that knowledge which maketh wise unto salvation,” without which other knowledge is power indeed, but is power to do evil. The labours of faithful men, ministers, elders, schoolmasters, concentrated within a small space, continued perseveringly, appear the likely and the only likely means of regenerating the degraded and vicious population which crowds our cities. The efficacy of such labours depends (under God’s blessing) on their concentration, and encreases in a higher ratio than it does. How such labours can be concentrated or sustained, except by public funds, *i. e.* after the manner of an Established Church, I cannot for my part conceive. But if any of those who are petitioning against the grant of such funds, and are persuading the poor so far to sacrifice their own best interests as to sign their petitions, have discovered some other practicable method by which the end proposed can be effected, in the name of all that is common to them and us,—in the name of our Lord and Master, and of that charity which

he inculcated, but which seems now to have followed himself to heaven, let them in condescension to our weakness, explain such practicable and effectual method?* Till that be done, let them refrain from misrepresenting our motives, in seeking a grant of public money, as if these were merely to strengthen our own sect, and to enrich ourselves, which we do, and they know we do, utterly disavow. The efficiency of spiritual labour, I observed above, encreases in a higher ratio than its concentration. The week-day labours of a minister who has some four or five thousand parishioners, accomplish but little with respect to the people in general. The sick, the afflicted, the poor, are enough, and more than enough, to occupy his whole spare time, and if he does visit from house to house, before he appears a second time, what he may have said before, has been long forgotten. It is only when the pastor's presence among his flock is almost con-

* Always excepting that *notable* proposal which would convert the heathens to Christianity *in general*, but *to no particular sect of it*,—which would make them neither Catholics nor Protestants,—would have them pray, but neither *with book* nor *without*.—This (as appears from Dr Welsh's admirable speech on Wednesday, 15th of April) is a scheme invented by Dr John Brown of Edinburgh. A doubt naturally arises whether the proposed “general receiving-houses,” in which the worship must be conducted after *no particular*, but after some *Catholic* fashion, and the doctrine taught in which must be as Catholic as the mode of worship, would not form a *sect by itself* as distinct at least as the Church of Scotland and the Secession Church from each other?

stant, his visits frequent, his acquaintance with their character and circumstances familiar, that much fruit is to be expected. "I have been ten years" said the indefatigable Oberlin, "learning every head in my parish, and obtaining an inventory of their moral and intellectual wants. I have laid my plan. I must have ten years to carry it into execution, and the ten following to correct their faults and vices."

(20.) Some of those who are candid enough to admit the spiritual destitution of our large towns, propose to supply it by what is called *the missionary system*, *i. e.*, by itinerating preachers. The only ground, as appears, on which this plan is preferred to the territorial or parochial is this,—*it is cheaper*. My present business being to enquire, not what is the *cheapest* but what is the most *effectual* expedient for evangelizing the people? I may be allowed merely to observe, in relation to this *very low* view of the subject, that the *most effectual way* of doing a thing is generally, though dearest at first, cheapest on the whole. "What is well done is twice done," as Poor Richard says; for whatever money is expended without accomplishing the object in view is only wasted, except, indeed, in so far as the failure may have served to direct to the adoption of other and more effectual measures. The advocates of Church extension found their demand on the fact, that thousands of the people are perishing for lack of knowledge. The opponents of that measure—those of them who are not so uncandid as to deny the fact—propose to supply

the spiritual famine by putting the people *on short allowance*. Now, without question, "half a loaf is better than no bread," yet surely enough is better than either. Even the truth of that proverb, however, as applied to spiritual food, seems to have been denied by a judge, than whom none more competent can be named. "From the terrible instances," says the venerable John Wesley, "which I met with in all parts of England, I am more and more convinced that the devil himself desires nothing more than this, that the people of any place should be half-awakened, and then left to themselves to fall asleep again, therefore I determined, by the grace of God, not to strike one blow in any place where I cannot follow the blow."

And now I hope I shall be excused, if I conclude with humbly but earnestly calling upon our Church, her members, her elders, and especially her ministers, to recognise and acknowledge in the fierce attacks to which she has been of late subjected, the hand of our God and Father chastising us for our sins. With how much worldliness, lukewarmness, want of zeal and devotedness are many of us chargeable! "Righteous, O Lord, are thy judgments." Let us pray that what we have suffered, or yet may suffer, may prove not punishment but correction. The enemy indeed afflicts us more than the war. That the profane, the infidel, the heretic, the Romanist, were "not with us," was known—but that our own brethren, the children of our mother, should league with them, yea, should lead

them on,—this we did not expect, and this does grieve us. “The Philistines and the inhabitants of Tyre,” we knew were our enemies—but our surprise is equalled only by our grief when we learn “the tabernacles of Edom are confederate with them.” And while, with the Antient Church, we cry, “Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem, who said, ‘raze to the foundation thereof,’—yet *this* is the spirit of our prayer, that God would *so remember them*, that they no longer should *forget themselves*.

In this controversy, there seems, in the case of many of us, to have been too much anger indulged against our adversaries, and too little against ourselves. We have thought rather what they ought to receive, than what we ought to give. We have looked too much at the doings of men, and too little at the hand of God, working by them. David complained, “Had an enemy reproached him, he could have borne it.” But the Lord, foreseeing the reproach of an enemy would not be severe enough—was he who loosed the tongue of Ahithophel, and permitted for a season *his* machinations, “whose counsel which he counselled, was as if a man did enquire at the oracle of God.” Let us humble ourselves, let us confess our sins, let us do works meet for repentance—and He who is merciful and gracious, will repent him of the evil. Though our enemies have many of them lost their consistency, in that they are our enemies—though the Church should lose her endowments, yet

let us not lose that which, unless we preserve, all is lost—"charity, which is the end of the commandment."

In defending the Church, we must not forget that we defend her *as the means to an end*. What pity if, in any case, we should *so* pursue the means, as in the pursuit, to *lose* the end. It is possible to be zealous in upholding the Church, without being equally zealous for that which the Church is upheld to effect. If indeed the Voluntary opinions *be* errors, they must be *great* errors and unconcern about their prevalence, can surely form no part of Christian wisdom; yet is our zeal no genuine zeal for God, if it be not less in the Voluntary controversy, than in that greater controversy in which God is engaged with all sinners and all sin, and in which we are pledged and sworn ever to maintain God's side of the question.

I confess I like not that temper of self-gratulation, which at present seems to me to distinguish the Church, and of which the language is—"She was dead—but she is alive." For at all periods of her history I read of many able and diligent ministers—and surely there are not a few of us now who might grow some degrees more spiritual and self-denied, and devoted, without intrenching on the limits of angelical perfection, or equalling many of those worthies, who fought the good fight like good soldiers—"and whose praise is in the Churches." Most of us would be far better ministers than we are, did we think ourselves

less so. There would be more grace in the Church if there appeared more humility. Let *us* take warning from the infirmities of others. God *resisteth the proud*. Those who boast they "live on godliness," have generally but few of the godly to cry "Amen" to their boasting.

This controversy cannot much longer survive. Would it were dead and buried, and men might say of it, "we have heard the fame thereof with our ears." This deafening cannonade of argument and contention must soon be silenced—the ammunition is spent—and the world is weary of it. The fate of the Church now lies with its members, and especially with its ministers, under *His* gracious guidance, than whom this Church acknowledgeth no other King. Let her members, therefore, uphold her in the best, the most effectual and legitimate manner, by living as the members of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Church invisible, whose names are written in heaven, and by continued prayers on her behalf to Him that promised respecting his own Church, "The gates of Hell shall not prevail against her." And especially let us, her ministers, lay it to our hearts, that her safety, as well as her efficiency leans, under God, mainly on us. Nothing but our zeal, our diligence, our abundant labours, can, humanly speaking, save the Church, and, I believe, nothing but the want of these can destroy her. Let us, therefore, feel our responsibility, for great at all times, it is now peculiarly so. The present circum-

stances, my reverend brethren, call upon us to exercise extraordinary patience, meekness, energy, self-denial. May he give us all needful aids who hath given us this promise,—“As thy day is, so shall thy strength be.” And oh! will the time never come when one fold shall contain all that are sheep of the one Great Shepherd,—when all that know the truth, shall carefully “hold the truth in love!” “Hasten, O Lord, thy kingdom, which is righteousness,” and therefore is “peace.” Amen.

THE END.

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LECTURE XII.

ON THE MEANS OF PROMOTING A RETURN TO THE PAROCHIAL ECONOMY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, &c.

THE original excellence of our Scottish parochial economy having been already set forth, and likewise the wide extent and sad effects of that departure from it, which the present ecclesiastical condition of the country exhibits, we naturally proceed to the consideration of the means to be used for promoting a return to it.

There are just two specific objects,—distinct, yet most intimately connected,—which patriotic Scotsmen, who desire to see every part of the land restored to the full benefit of the parochial economy, must steadily keep in view, and exert every nerve to attain. The *first* is the *subdivision of parishes*. To shew the immense importance of this object, allow me to call your attention to the reason why we have parishes at all,—why we are not content with a mere system of congregations, but require territorial districts to go along with them, and to be assigned to the ministers respectively, as the spheres of their labour. The reason is, that

none may suffer neglect, or want pastoral service ; and that every member of the community, however lowly in station, or depraved in character, may be presented with the benefits of the gospel, and have one, at least, to whom his well-being is a matter of benevolent solicitude, and whose duty it is to “ care for his soul.” We love not the system of mere congregations, because it makes it not a part of the minister’s imperative duty to labour among those who belong not to any congregation,—those who, from poverty, indifference, or disinclination, do not frequent the House of God. On them you cannot bring religion to bear, except through the instrumentality of the parochial plan. You may build churches, you may appoint ministers, but unless you assign *districts*, and make your churches district, that is, parochial, churches, and your ministers parochial ministers, the depths of society, where such persons are situated, will never be effectually explored. The superiority of the system of parishes over that of congregations, may be illustrated, by supposing the case of two populous cities suffering from famine. In the king’s granaries there is great store of food, and commissioners are appointed freely to deal it out, as the necessities of his famished subjects may require. Accordingly, in the one city, they open a number of depôts, which are, for the most part, huddled together in the same spot, no respect being had to a convenient local distribution ; and they leave it to those who are in want to come and ask a supply. The congregational plan is strictly analogous to this. But, in the

other city, every locality obtains its depôt ; and, moreover, it is not held to be enough that food be given to such as may repair to the depôts in quest of it ; regard is paid to the circumstance, that many must have reached those more advanced and more dreary stages of the horrible process of starvation, which are characterised by a total absence of all power to minister to themselves in any degree, or to make known their own case, and by insensibility to the gnawing of the hunger that consumes them ; and it is therefore arranged that the superintendent of each depôt shall go forth, with his auxiliaries, to explore the locality connected with his charge, and to minister the needful cordials to those who can no longer stretch out the hand to take them, and from whom the desire to have them is fled, while they require them more urgently than ever. To this corresponds our system of parishes. The design, then, for which that system is preferred, and parochial divisions are made, being to secure Christian instruction and pastoral assiduities for all, it is obvious that the very same design requires that parishes be not large. A parish of great population is, practically, equivalent to no parish. The pastor of such a parish is unable, however willing he may be, to do the duty imposed on him ; and the end contemplated in assigning him a parish is defeated. Nay, it were better to have no parochial divisions whatever, than to have the unwieldy ones which are so common in our thickly peopled districts. In the former case, there would be no disguise of the evil which exists ; while, in the latter, it is in some degree hid from observation, and the necessity

of taking means for its cure is not felt. The friends of the people, therefore, must not rest till large parishes are put an end to. I shall not be surprised if some declare, when they hear the system of parochial divisions extolled, that they see none of those advantages which it is said to produce. I can tell the reason why they do not. That system of parochial divisions with which they are acquainted, is a system of large, of unmanageable parochial divisions, and is no more to be identified with the system which has now been recommended, than is the swollen river that desolates the country, with the streamlet that gladdens and adorns it. When the huge parishes of modern cities are broken down, and ministers of piety and diligence have been planted in all their sections, so that each locality of 2000 inhabitants shall have its pastor, not to speak of its elders and schoolmasters, on whose services it may reckon as exclusively its own, then will be exhibited that parochial system, from which may be confidently anticipated the happiest results.

But in order to pave the way for the subdivision which is required, there is one practice which must be given up. We must have done with large churches, of which large parishes are the natural accompaniments. When our forefathers built large churches, they invariably appointed two or more ministers to serve them ; and thus, in effect, the parishes were subdivided. Now, however, it is different. Edifices of enormous capacity rise, it is true, on every side ; but collegiate charges are proscribed. In this way has been taking place a still wider and wider departure from

the true parochial system ; and parishes, abundantly sufficient to give full employment to several ministers, have been left to the unassisted labours of one. That collegiate charges have fallen into disrepute, affords not, in itself, any cause for regret. Serious disadvantages attend them. It is, however, much to be regretted that, after they have been given up, the practice of rearing vast temples should be retained, so as obviously to hinder the multiplication of parishes of a manageable size.

Another step towards the accomplishment of the great object of subdivision, is to increase the number of our places of worship. For every parish there must be a church ; and, as we have no spare churches, we must have an additional number to enable us to subdivide. It is very boldly asserted that there is enough—aye, more than enough, of church room already furnished to the people of Scotland. Suppose we grant it to be so, it by no means follows that we have churches enow. A large church will not supply the place of two small ones, for the purposes of the parochial system. If a case has been made out for a subdivision of parishes, and if it be admitted that churches to spare there are none, it is plain that more are required. There are orthodox bodies, indeed, not in connexion with the Church of Scotland, possessing places of worship which might be made parochial, if they themselves would agree to it: and it is a pleasing thought that one of them is likely soon to furnish us with forty additional parish churches. But we need a great many more new parishes, and consequently

new churches, than forty. If the whole United Secession were now to abandon their wild crusade against those who never did them any harm, if their ministers were to come forward with the olive-branch in their hands, and express their readiness to co-operate with their brethren for the good of the country, and to let us make themselves parish ministers, and their chapels parish churches, still there would be a deficiency. I must deny, however, both that our churches are so numerous as they ought to be, and that the sum total of our church accommodation is at all adequate to the wants of the people. That I am not mistaken you will readily believe, when you consider the following testimony of a distinguished minister of the United Secession in this city, who certainly cannot be looked on as a partial witness :—

“ Nowhere, perhaps, in the Christian world are abler and more active ministers to be met with than in many of our cities. But, alas ! ‘ what are they among so many ? ’ Their numbers bear no adequate proportion to the population of the cities in which they reside. In few or none of our large cities is there any thing like accommodation, either in the Establishment or out of it, for all the inhabitants, supposing them disposed to attend public instruction There is thus a large portion of the inhabitants of large cities necessarily excluded from the benefits of right religious instruction. The seats in the places of worship, where an uncorrupted dispensation of Divine Truth is to be met with, are occupied by persons able and willing to pay for them ; and the poor, to whom the Gospel certainly should be preached, are nearly excluded from the benefit. Many who are both able and willing to contribute to the support of the Gospel find it difficult to be accommodated, and many more, who are neither very willing

nor able, are furnished with a somewhat plausible excuse, both to themselves and others, for habitually neglecting the means of religious instruction. The ministers of the Gospel, of whatever denomination, find that it requires all their time and attention to perform the pastoral duties to those under their care, and, of course, there is a great body of persons in a most destitute situation as to their spiritual interests, who have no man to care for their souls."

Thus spoke Dr John Brown of Broughton Place, in 1819, before the Associate Synod; and if the reverend gentleman spoke so strongly in 1819, what energy of expression would he not now have recourse to, after the population has experienced an increase of about 450,000, to which the increase of churches during the same period has assuredly been far from bearing any suitable proportion!

It here becomes necessary that I should ask you to reconsider the propriety of parishes being subdivided, and fully to make up your minds whether or not it ought to be done. Are you satisfied that it is for the good of the poor, that the country should be portioned out into small parishes, and a minister of God stationed in each, whose duty shall require him to be as cheerful and diligent in communicating the benefits of the gospel to those who cannot pay him for his labours, as to those who are able to make a liberal pecuniary return,—to watch for the souls of the whole inhabitants, and to perambulate the bounds as the shepherd of the district, on whose oversight and assistance the humblest and most despised of the people have a claim? Do you feel persuaded that nothing short of this scheme will suffice for the purpose of recovering

to Christian habits such as have fallen away from attendance on the means of grace, of confronting Sabbath-breakers and contemners of ordinances with the revealed terrors of the Lord, and of carrying religion into those recesses of human society, where lie the main sources of civil disorder and crime? Are you content to admit that the small parish, with its zealous pastor, the little band of visiting elders, and the Sabbath school teacher, constitutes the best of all home missions, justly bearing off the palm on account of the power and the steadiness with which it operates, and the permanence by which it is distinguished—and containing within itself all the capabilities, and discharging with unrivalled effect all the functions, of local societies for circulating Bibles, distributing tracts, diffusing Christian knowledge, promoting temperance, suppressing vice, and training up the young in the fear of the Lord? You may safely go all this length. History informs us that there was a time when the parochial institution received a fair trial, and when it gave full proof of its efficacy for these varied and noble ends. “I verily believe,” says Kirkton, in a well-known passage, which describes the state of Scotland in the period immediately preceding 1660, “there were more souls converted to Christ in that short period of time, than in any other season since the Reformation, though of treble its duration; nor was there ever greater purity and plenty of the means of grace than was in that time.—Every parish had a minister, every village had a school, every family almost had a Bible; yea, in most of the country, all the children of age could read the

scriptures, and were provided of Bibles, either by their parents, or their ministers. I have lived many years in a parish where I never heard an oath; and you might have rode many miles before you had heard any. Also, you would not, for a great part of the country, have lodged in a family where the Lord was not worshipped, by reading, singing, and prayer. Nobody complained more of our church-government than our taverners, whose ordinary lamentation was, their trade was broke, people were become so sober."

But, if you are to pronounce in favour of the subdivision of parishes, it is necessary to warn you of one thing—you must discard Voluntaryism; the Voluntary principle has none of the pith which is requisite for carrying it into effect. Small parishes, however much they may conduce to the publicgood, cannot be expected to make a direct return in money equal to the expense which they occasion. When a minister is given to those who are both able and willing to contribute to his support, the Voluntary principle may be entrusted with his maintenance: but when a minister is appointed for the express purpose of devoting a great part of his time and labour to the moral and spiritual improvement of those who cannot, and those who will not, help to maintain him, it is perfectly evident that extrinsic aid is indispensable in order to keep him at his post. It is not my province to shew whence that aid ought to come, or to demonstrate the duty of the State to afford it. That is a point which previous Lecturers have most conclusively settled. It falls to me simply to set forth the impossibility of restoring our parochial economy

if we are to be thrown upon the Voluntary, or *self-supporting* principle, and *endowments* are to be refused us. Come from what quarter the endowments may,—whether from private benefactions, from the State, or from both,—the present proposition is, that endowments we cannot do without. It was observed formerly that there are *two* objects, to the attainment of which we must direct our efforts, if we would accomplish the reconstruction of our parochial economy; and the subdivision of parishes was specified as one of these. The other I have now to mention; it is *the procuring of endowments*. The leading opponents of the Church of Scotland have taken up a somewhat extreme position in respect of endowments. They deny them to be lawful, or to be capable of serving the cause of religion. It is not my wish to indulge in any sort of asperity, but I cannot help remarking that it is the Scotch Dissenters chiefly, who have taken up this ground, and that they have amongst them very few endowments. Their English brethren, on the other hand, have many *charities* or *foundations*, appropriated to the support of the gospel; and in England we find that that part of the New Light which relates to endowments has made wonderfully little progress; and not one minister there has been heard of as yet, upon whom the disquisitions and reasonings of the Scotch Voluntary leaders have told so effectually as to induce him to renounce the income derived from an endowment. Nay, it is impossible not to be struck with the fact that, few in number as the religious foundations possessed by the Scotch Dissenters are, these have not,

to this good hour, been surrendered as a sacrifice to principle, and to the conscientious persuasion that the "ordinance of Christ" has determined that such are not the means by which his ministers should be supported.

The scripture interdict upon endowments was removed in the Second Lecture of this Course. Farther demonstration than was there given that they are *lawful*, would be superfluous. The *advantage*, which ministers derive from endowments in the discharge of their pastoral duties, has been well described in Lecture Seventh. But on the *necessity* for endowments, in order to the right working, and even the existence, of the parochial economy, something remains to be said. I can suppose a state of the case, in which we should have no difficulty in dispensing with endowments altogether. If there were no poor people, who had nothing to give, and no wicked people, who would give nothing, for the support of the teachers of Christianity; if, in every corner of the land, and in every grade of society, religion and money had their joint abode; the unendowed system would do very well. But that has not been the state of the case in any country under heaven hitherto. It is not the state of the case in the United States of America; else, why do American statistics discover *six thousand* vacant churches there, and why do Americans themselves declare that *five millions* of their countrymen enjoy not the teaching of a settled Christian ministry? It is not the state of the case in Scotland, as all of us can bear witness; and, therefore, neither here, nor in any other land, has the au-

spicious period yet dawned, when we can commit to the unendowed system the care of our religious interests.

There are just four possible predicaments which men may occupy in relation to the support of their pastors. There may be a people willing, but unable ; or a people able, but unwilling ; or a people neither able nor willing ; or, finally, a people both able and willing. For this last predicament we have already said that the unendowed system will do ; but the first three demand endowments. The maxim, that every man should be left to pay his own minister, however popular it may be, is exquisitely cruel, and in glaring opposition to scripture. It is adverse to the great design for which the Christian ministry was instituted,—of preaching the gospel *to the poor*, and it is likewise at war with our Lord's injunction to *compel* the reluctant to come in. If you lay the burden of maintaining their ministers upon the poor, who cannot do it, what is that but in effect to prevent the gospel from being preached to them ? And if you impose a like burden upon the profligate and the worthless, by whom you know that it will never be borne, are you not thereby arresting the exercise of that Christian compulsion which is commanded by the Saviour ? Dissenters themselves do not act upon a maxim which, I fear, they have nevertheless helped to introduce. They have done much to propagate the gospel abroad, and they have done something to spread it at home ; but how have they done this ? Not, most assuredly, by adhering to the maxim that every man should be left to

pay his own religious instructor, but by adopting what is essentially the system of endowments. How do they proceed? After landing their missionaries on heathen shores, do they tell them to seek their future subsistence from those to whom they are to preach, agreeably to what is called “the Ordinance of Christ?” No, no! They *endow* their missionaries. These men all know that, whether the results of their labours be prosperous or adverse, their salaries are sure; and that any fluctuations which the cause they are endeavouring to promote may experience, will not affect their yearly incomes. Dissenters act in this way with good reason. They thus avert from their missionaries the fate of being *starved* out of the field of enterprise by the poverty, the suspicion, or the ill-will of the people. But why will our friends be inconsistent? Why seek to hinder the Church of Scotland from following out the very principles on which they themselves do not scruple to act? Why cast into her path those dogmas about the mischievous tendencies and incurable evils of endowments, which are not allowed in a single instance to obstruct their own?

Is it right, then, to give ministers to those who *wont* pay for them?—Can any seriously put such a question? What indignation would not that man encounter, who should propose that all persons, known to be meditating suicide, be allowed to have their own way; giving it as his opinion that it was nobody’s business, nobody’s duty, to interfere? But more overwhelming is the indignation with which *he* ought to be assailed,

who makes it a question whether means should be taken to dissuade and to hinder men from destroying their own souls. Undoubtedly, we say, ministers ought to be given to such as wont pay for them. Religion, reason, humanity, with united voice, demand it; and Voluntaryism must not be suffered to prevent it!

Among the various prejudices which those who advocate the cause of endowments have to contend with, a very formidable one arises from the idea that the object in view is to enrich the clergy. The idea is totally unfounded. We ask for endowments, that we may be enabled to remedy two great evils which affect the moral and religious welfare of the people, and which bar our return to the parochial economy. One evil is the lack of pastoral superintendence, and on that I have dwelt sufficiently already. The other is the high price exacted for seats in all our large towns. No long argument can be necessary to shew that high seat-rents are inseparable from the unendowed system. If those ministers who are against endowments would declare also against *stipends*, we might admit the compatibility of their system with moderately priced seats; but so long as they cleave to the stipend, it is plain that they are only forcing the managers of their chapels to raise the price of seats to the highest limit, when they discard the aid of endowment. And can it be disputed that a high charge for seats is a great evil? Has it not often compelled the artisan and the labourer to rent but one sitting, and to leave the greater part of the family at home, when, if a smaller sum had

been required, they would have rented two, three, or four sittings, and would have carried the greater part of the family to church along with them? Has it not, in too many instances, by the irregularities to which it has led, and the obstacles it has presented, broken down the church-going habits of those in the humbler walks of life,—furnished, where the inclination to repair to the House of God was not strong, a pretext for ceasing to visit it,—and nursed the incipient dislike to the services of the Sanctuary, till that has grown to an almost unconquerable hatred? And do not our costly seats inflict, at the present moment, this other injury of preventing, by the empty or unlet pews they occasion,* the abuse of unwieldy parishes from being exposed to public gaze in its undisguised deformity, and of palliating the audacity of superficial observers, when they deny its existence altogether? To put an end, therefore, to this practice of letting seats at a high rent, we propose to retire upon endowments for the main support of our parochial institutions. In this way

* That there is no other cause at work in producing unlet seats, or that there are no low-priced seats unlet, is by no means affirmed. *Bad* seats will not let, however low the price; and it could not but be expected that there should be unlet seats in a church that is placed in an inconvenient situation, or that is served by an aged and infirm incumbent. There is, moreover, a large part of the population, which must be regained to a desire for Christian ordinances through the instrumentality of a sub-division of parishes, and the consequent operation of an efficient pastoral superintendence, before they will occupy, on any terms, the church room which may be provided.

alone can the mischievous practice be abolished. Proceed upon the unendowed system, and I say not that you create a motive, but you produce a *necessity*, to increase the rents. Have recourse to an endowment, and the necessity exists no longer; it then becomes *possible* to keep the seats low in price, and to supply what measure of gratuitous accommodation the circumstances of the parish may require. We regard the proper object of endowment to be, that the people may have church-room, pastoral superintendence, and Christian instruction, at little or no cost to them; and it is to enable us to give them all these that we apply for it to the Legislature.

The present condition of the Church of Scotland, in reference to a return to that parochial economy, from the admirable working and happy adaptations of which the ancient greatness of our country was derived, is one, it is gratifying to be able to say, of lively feeling, and of ever-increasing activity. Multitudes have recently awakened to its importance. In some districts, the friends of the Church seem to vie with each other in the energy and variety of their efforts to promote it. The matter has been warmly taken up by the General Assembly itself, and a powerful Committee, constituted by that body, is now at work, under the most animating and invigorating leadership. Numerous sub-committees and provincial associations have sprung into existence, and are all co-operating in the same great cause. A most extensive and efficient agency is thus engaged. There is occasion for

it. *More than TEN additional churches and ministers must be obtained every year, so as to keep pace with the progress of the population, independently of what has to be done for supplying the deficiency which past neglect has allowed to accumulate.* "The work is great and large." Let us hope, however, that it will be performed. It is neither an extravagant proposal nor an unwarrantable expectation, that the Government shall provide a small endowment for the places of worship which may be erected; and if, as is believed, a single Missionary Society in Scotland was able, some years ago, to raise £10,000 annually, it will be strange indeed should the General Assembly fail to realise at least an equal revenue, from the free contributions of its people, to meet the expense of building the churches required. Four special collections in the year, not *recommended*, but *ordered*, to be made in each of our thousand parish churches, would yield £12,000, supposing a very low average indeed; and four collections will not be thought too many by those who are suitably impressed with the vast importance of the object to which they would be devoted.

A prejudice exists, it must be confessed, against endowments by the State; and it is probable enough, that the Church will be thereby obstructed in her enterprise for a time. But will that prejudice last? I do not believe it. The people will, in the end, find out their true interest. The real object of endowment will not always be misunderstood. It will yet be discover-

ed, that never was error more complete, or aspersion more unjust, than that of those who call the advocates of Church Extension the enemies of the People, the oppressors of the Poor ! Meanwhile, we wait with calmness for the breaking of the clouds of misrepresentation before the light of truth ; and our zeal is unceasingly stimulated by the conviction, that it is the People's cause which we have espoused—the best inheritance of the Poor, which we are toiling to restore !

On behalf of the Church of Scotland, I ask you this evening to recognise her as being, by virtue of the principles which she asserts, and that parochial economy which she maintains and wishes to extend, *the Church of the Poor*. She claims that honourable appellation at your hands ; and you shall hear the grounds on which she holds that you cannot refuse to concede it.

1st, *She ministers to the temporal necessities of the poor*. You are probably aware that the relief of the poor is the object to which the collections made at the church doors in all the parishes of Scotland are appropriated. But few perhaps have an idea how considerable is the sum which thus goes to meet the exigencies of pauperism. It is certainly below the truth to say, that it is *fifty thousand pounds a-year*. And this large sum is distributed on a principle which enhances the merit of the gift. All who are in want are admitted to a share, without regard to the religious denomination to which they may belong. The Church of Scotland, with a liberality for which she surely deserves credit, requires not as a condition that the reci-

pipients of her bounty shall be of her own communion, but deals out her charity indiscriminately to the necessitous of every creed. And it may serve to evince the sincerity of those professions of concern for the spiritual good of the *irreligious* poor, by which she supports her suit for Parliamentary aid, when it is considered, that from the sacred fund of her collections she most assiduously ministers towards the alleviation of their temporal miseries. Over and above the munificent gift of her weekly offerings for the relief of the destitute, she farther discovers the benevolence of her system, and vindicates her right to be saluted as “the Church of the Poor,” by constituting it a part of the regular work of her office-bearers to take charge of the application of her alms, and to perform the duty of distributing them to such as have need. However far she may have degenerated in other respects from what she once was,—and I stand not here to maintain that she can be accused of no defections,—the spirit has never left her, which inspired the generous sentiments expressed in the following paragraph from the First Book of Discipline :—“ Every several kirk must provide for the poor within itself ; for fearful and horrible it is, that the poor, whom not only God the Father in his law, but Christ Jesus in his Evangel, and the Holy Spirit speaking by St Paul, hath so earnestly commended to our care, are universally so contemned and despised. We are not patrons for stubborn and idle beggars, who, running from place to place, make a craft of their begging, whom the civil magistrate ought

to compel to work or then punish : But for the widow and fatherless, the aged, impotent or lamed, who neither can nor may travel for their sustentation, we say that God commands his people to be careful ; and therefore for such, as also for persons of honesty fallen into decay and poverty, ought such provision to be made, that of our abundance their indigence may be relieved.”

2d, *The Church of Scotland educates the poor.* In other countries, it was the State that took the most active and the leading part in forwarding the cause of general education ; but here, the honour of having done so belongs to the Church. Before the first year of her existence had elapsed, she appeared as the advocate of a public establishment of schools where all classes might be instructed, and began a series of efforts, which has been continued up to the present hour, by addressing to the rulers of the nation the following earnest remonstrance :—“ Of necessity it is that your honours be most careful for the virtuous education and godly upbringing of the youth of this realm, if either ye now thirst unfeignedly for the advancement of Christ’s glory, or yet desire the continuance of his benefits to the generation following ; for, as the youth must succeed to us, so we ought to be careful that they have knowledge and erudition to profit and comfort that which ought to be most dear unto us, to wit, the kirk and spouse of our Lord Jesus.” In the same memorable document, she required that, in order to the wide diffusion of knowledge, a school should be

planted side by side with every church ; she insisted, moreover, on an endowment for the school, that the services of a well-qualified teacher might be secured, and the cost of instruction not be great; and reckoning even this not enough, she farther declared it to be expedient, that “ poor men’s children *suld be helpit.*” If the Church had been less hearty and determined in the cause, her zeal would have been extinguished altogether by the neglect with which the statesmen of the period treated her proposals. But she deserted not the poor when she found that she was their only friend. At the very time that she was struggling to maintain her own liberties, she did what she could, with the means she was able to raise, for the erection of schools ; and, ever as the occasion presented itself, she took care to remind a reluctant government of its duty. Fifty-six years after she had first urged the measure of a parochial school establishment, that is to say in 1616, the Government was induced to take it up, and an order of Privy Council was issued in its favour, which was followed, in 1633, by an act of the Legislature. But of what use would a law have been, giving to every parish a right to a school and school-master supported at the heritors’ expense, had there been no influential and vigorous party to occupy, on behalf of the parishioners, the vantage-ground thus acquired, and to see that the law was enforced ? Happily the Church was at hand to undertake that necessary duty ; with a mixture of prudence, and energy, and perseverance, she applied herself to the task, in those

days both delicate and difficult, of inducing the landholders to obey ; and, when gentle means failed, as sometimes they did, she appeared, by her officers, in the civil courts, as a prosecutor in order to compel them. “ The Parliamentary statute,” says Dr M‘Crie, “ has indeed been eventually of great benefit ; but *it would have remained a dead letter but for the exertions of the Church courts.*” Having, by dint of efforts, persevered in for more than a hundred years, realised her great scheme of a Parochial Establishment of Schools, where education, good and cheap, might be obtained by the humblest of the people, the Church did not cease to watch over the interests which it had so long been her study to promote. In the course of time, as the country underwent changes and the population increased, the parochial schools required to be supplemented ; at no time, perhaps, in the Highland districts, had they been sufficient ; for these and other reasons she established her Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, which, besides engaging in many benevolent undertakings, and employing Missionaries at home and abroad, * supported a large number of schools † throughout a great part of last century. And I need do no more than allude to the fact, that about ten years ago were instituted, and now are

* The devoted Brainerd was one of the Missionaries of this Society.

† The number in 1758 was so high as 176, in which were taught 6409 children. *Vide Church of Scotland Mag.* Vol. I. p. 46.

in full operation, the Assembly's Highland Schools, which, as well as the numerous schools of the Christian Knowledge Society still carried on, are entirely upheld out of funds collected through the exertions of the Church. Of the local efforts of the Church to extend the benefits of education, it would be quite impossible here to give any detail; but some idea may be formed of their magnitude from the fact, that "the ministers and kirk-sessions of the ten city churches of Glasgow have, with the help of their congregations, established and endowed, and at this moment maintain, schools in which above 3000 children are receiving efficient and sound scriptural education!" *

3d, The Church of Scotland is the Church of the Poor, because she contends for a weekly day of rest and religious privilege to the poor. Who will say that it is not desirable that the poor man should have his Sabbath? That there should be one day in every seven when the labourer, and the mechanic, and the tradesman, may suspend their toil, and dismiss their cares,—partake more freely, around their own firesides, of the sweets of domestic enjoyment,—and, in the religious exercises of the family and the congregation, taste and see that God is good? Who would not deplore it as a national evil, if the "cottar" were to be deprived of his "Saturday night?" But *can* the poor man have that privilege, unless the law of the land

* Speech of Rev. R. Buchanan, delivered at a meeting of the Glasgow Educational Society.

shall guarantee it to him? Alas! The poor man must have bread; his wife and children must not be left to starve; and, if his employer should be godless enough to require him to work seven days in the week, it need not create surprise should he yield the point, rather than be discharged. That individuals are not wanting who would rob their poor dependants of the Sabbath, did the law allow that to be done, few will seek to deny. In the early ages, before the State gave any countenance to the religion of Jesus, the Christian slaves, of whom there were great numbers, were universally compelled to serve their heathen masters on the Sabbath as on other days; at the present time, we find that, in proportion as the legislative protection of the Sabbath is relaxed, avarice and power wrest it from those in humble life; and no doubt can be entertained that, when legislative protection shall be altogether withdrawn, an overwhelming influence will force the poor man to surrender, for secular purposes, that day which God gave him to be consecrated to repose and devotion. Wherefore, the Church of Scotland abhors the notion that the State is going out of its province, when protecting the holy and peaceful institution of the Sabbath. She abhors that notion, because she sees in it a thrust which is exclusively directed against the poor. *The rich* need not the aid of a statute to secure to them the unmolested enjoyment of the Sabbath. With *their* Sabbath no man can intermeddle. But it is very different with those who are dependent upon others for their livelihood,—for bread to themselves,

their wives, and their children. *Their* Sabbath is exposed to danger. To them the hard alternative may be presented of loss of employment, and consequent destitution, on the one hand, or Sabbath-day labour on the other. The Church therefore maintains, that the State is bound to uphold the Sabbatical Institution; and she argues the matter thus: "The poor man has a right to the Sabbath. It is his property, which he holds by a charter from the God of heaven; and it is all the more precious to him, because it is the only property which he can call his own. No man can take it from him without injustice and oppression. He ought to be protected in the possession of it. You secure the rich man's right to his estate by every legal sanction; you guard it by most effectual penalties; and why should you be less favourable to the poor? Why should the poor man's inheritance be thought unworthy of your care? Why not surround it, too, with the fence of legal protection?"*

* There is a schism among our Voluntary friends on the question of the Sabbath,—some affirming, and others denying the lawfulness of protecting it by civil enactment. Dr Wardlaw, who is favourable to a legislative sanction of the Sabbath, very happily and conclusively argues the case, (Vid. Discourses on the Sabbath, pp. 162-4.) on the principle that a man's Sabbath is his *property*, and that the Government is bound to secure him in the possession of it as such. Mr Marshall, however, seems to be of opinion that Dr Wardlaw makes an admission which is fatal to Voluntaryism, when he permits the State to sanction and enforce a cessation of labour on the Christian *Sunday*, in preference to the Jewish *Saturday*, or the

4th, The Church of Scotland is the Church of the Poor, because she asserts THE RIGHT OF EVERY SCOTSMAN to religious instruction, and Christian privileges, whether he can pay for them or not. We live in an age of philanthropy. There is no lack of commiseration for the poor. No man, who was unprepared to become the object of general detestation for his cruelty, would question their right to a maintenance, in the last resort at all events, out of the public treasury; and Vandal would be *his* name who denied that the poor had a claim upon the State for the means of education. But many stop short here. Just as if sentence of exclusion from heaven had been passed against the poor; or, as if the blight of poverty annihilated where it fell the immortal principle of man, so that his connection with eternity was at an end; many, who would hold no reproach more foul than that they wronged the poor, never dream of asserting the obligation of the community to do what it can to provide for

Friday of the Mahometans. With Mr Marshall, I agree. I should be glad if Dr Wardlaw would explain how the State, *upon Voluntary principles*, can know that it is the *first*, and not the *sixth* or the *seventh* day of the week, which is a man's property, or how the State can take upon itself to pronounce the infidel in the wrong, who says there is no such thing as a Sabbath at all among the gifts of God to man. The Doctor certainly gives up Voluntaryism in his argument about the Sabbath. But whether it is not better, far better, to be inconsistent with one's principles, than otherwise, where they lead to unnatural and impious extremes, is a very different question.

their souls, and to employ its resources in support of an agency which may labour for their spiritual improvement. From the guilt of this cruel omission the Church of Scotland is free. Her doctrine has always been, that the State is most solemnly bound to regard the poor in respect not only of their existence in this world, but of their destination to another ; and to consider that their poverty not only tends to make them miserable here, but likewise, so long as Christian instruction and privilege must be paid for, has a bearing adverse to their welfare hereafter ;—that, moreover, the judicious employment of pecuniary means is equally adapted to the merciful end of neutralising both these tendencies ; and that, therefore, if it be incumbent on the State to use the means referred to, of which great abundance is at its command, for the removal of the inferior evil, the neutralisation of the less pernicious tendency,—much more incumbent is it upon the State to bestow them freely to remove an evil, whose dreadful issue may be eternal death in the world to come ! The Church has always held it to be a monstrous thing to say that the poor man has a right to call upon the Government to assist him in obtaining the meat that perisheth, but that he has no right to call upon it to assist him in obtaining,—what he needs far more urgently,—the bread of life ! She deems the rulers, who hasten not to lend their aid in arresting the progress of spiritual starvation, a thousand times more criminal than if they had stood by unmoved, while their subjects were perishing of bodily hunger. And, whether

the poor know it or not, it is the fact, that, as the Church of Scotland has hitherto been the faithful custodier of the most precious of all their rights, so now, in the field of controversy, she has become its most determined champion. She makes war upon the system of high seat-rents, because its practical effect is to strip the poor of the privilege of hearing the word of God:—She is equally hostile to the system of non-endowment, because it necessarily leads to that of high seat-sents; and likewise because it obliges the minister to labour chiefly among those who can remunerate his attention, and contracts the range of pastoral superintendence, so as to shut out the poor:—She is the enemy of the doctrine that the magistrate has nothing to do with religion, because, among innumerable other reasons, it goes to overturn all public provision for the spiritual instruction of those who cannot provide spiritual instruction for themselves:—And the patrimony, of which it is now proposed to spoil her, she will defend to the last,—not for the sake of the present body of ministers, with whose interests the keenest of her adversaries protest that they would never interfere,—but for the sake of the many hundreds of thousands of Scotsmen, who receive through its means the blessings of the Gospel, without money and without price.

So much for the Church of Scotland as the Church of the Poor. Should you hear one,—as in these times it is likely you may,—railing at the Church as the *oppressor of the poor*, your reply ought to be to this effect: “Can that Church be guilty of oppressing the

poor, which, of all the churches in the world, Established or Dissenting, is the only one which consecrates the weekly offerings of her people to the support of the poor? Can that Church be an enemy to the poor, which has signalized herself, more than any other church in Christendom, by her patriotic and triumphant exertions to educate the poor? Above all, can that Church be hostile to the poor, whose very existence is now in peril, and whose ruin is conspired by the Papist, the Infidel, and the Revolutionist, because she cleaves to the principle, that it is the highest duty of the State to give Scriptural instruction and a Christian ministry to the poor?—*Bread, learning, religion, are her gifts : and thus it is that she oppresses the poor !*"

It yet remains that, on behalf of the Church of Scotland, I should claim for her another distinction,—that of being *The Church of the People*.

1st, She is the People's Church, *by reason of her popular constitution*. That it is correct so to designate her constitution, is proved by a remarkable fact. In England, as well as in Scotland, there are many Dissenters. But in England, where Episcopacy is established, there are no Dissenting Episcopalians,—there is not a single Dissenting Bishop. By analogical inference we should expect that, in Scotland, where Presbyterianism is established, there would be no Dissenting Presbyterians—and not one Dissenting Presbytery. How different, however, is the state of the case ! The Dissenters here have adopted the Constitution of the Church as their model, a great majority of their

number are zealous Presbyterians, and they have erected upwards of forty Presbyteries throughout the country.

One feature of her constitution, which has contributed to give it a popular character, is to be found in the equal rank and universal accessibility of her ministers. Had it pleased her, there might have been great lords of Parliament among the clergy,—dignitaries, set on high to be gazed at, but too far removed to be spoken to, or consulted with, save by the gentry and nobles of the land ; but she steadily rejected the temptation ; unambitious of worldly grandeur, and not coveting secular power, her fixed purpose was that, while holding her ministers entitled, by their acquirements and by their office, to the respectful attention of the most exalted, she would not permit so much as one of them to assume a station which might practically hinder him from being,—what the Redeemer himself had been—a friend of publicans and sinners. She would not hear of an elevated order of clergy, in accommodation to the taste and circumstances of the upper classes of society, and a meaner sort, as adapted to the body of the people ; she ever repudiated a polity, which in her eyes had the aspect of bringing worldly distinctions into the House of God, and seemed to imply that rich and poor, high and low, were not on a level there.

Then again look to the Eldership, another of the features from which the popular character of her constitution is derived. There are two classes of office-bearers, to which the administration of her affairs is

entrusted, and by which her powers are exercised, and of these the eldership is one. In every parish in the kingdom the elders are invested with an effectual controul over all matters relating to its spiritual superintendence. In every Presbytery, and Synod, and General Assembly, the elders sit side by side with the pastors of the Church, having an equal voice, and being almost equally numerous. And whence come these elders, to whom is assigned so important a part in the government of the Church? They come from among the people,—they are a part of the people,—they are the representatives of the people. Upon no class of the community has sentence of disqualification been passed. Respectability, indeed, is required; not, however, the respectability of the world,—not the respectability of mere station, but that respectability which a station the most illustrious cannot possess in the absence, or a station the most obscure be without when it has the presence, of Christian worth to grace it.* Accordingly, the singular but interesting spectacle, to

* A very beautiful illustration of the spirit of our Ecclesiastical Constitution, relative to this point, is afforded by the following extract from the “Order” for the appointment of Elders in the Church of Edinburgh, which was approved by the General Assembly, (1582,) and adopted as a model for the rest of the country:—“The maniest votes, *without respect of persone*, hath the first place in the eldership, so that, if a poor man excede the rich man in votes, he precedeth him in place, and is called the first, second, and third Elder, as the votes answereth.”

which no other religious denomination can afford a parallel, is, in point of fact, exhibited in her congregations and her judicatories, of the peer and the cottager acting together, on a footing of perfect equality, enjoying the same privileges, exercising the same powers, and performing the same duties. As illustrative, then, of the popular constitution of the Church, we point to the elder,—to the *blue-bonneted* elder of the upland parish,—and we ask you if the name of “the Church of the People” be not most appropriate for a Church, which pronounces that humble and unpretending peasant admissible to a place in her General Assembly, where he may sit on the same bench, and vote from the same roll, with the nobles of the nation.

2d, The Church of Scotland is the Church of the People, *in consequence of what she has done for the people*. She has asserted their civil liberties. Her history, from the period of the Reformation to the Revolution, that is, for nearly a century and a half, is, in fact, a history of those events, which terminated in the full recognition, and final settlement, of the rights and privileges which, as citizens, we now enjoy. He who would write the history of Scottish Freedom, must write the history of the Scottish Church. He who would narrate the lives of those to whom the cause of Scottish Freedom is principally indebted, must become the biographer of the Scottish Clergy. Is this the language of unfounded panegyric? Read and judge for yourselves. Go back to the time when the great struggle between liberty and despotism commenced,

watch the onward progress of the contest, and, after you have followed it, through successive generations, to the memorable epoch of its glorious close, tell us what you have seen. Have you seen the Church in league with the Crown against the people, and lending all the weight of her influence and authority to confirm the usurpations of the former, and to silence the complaints, and crush the resistance of the latter? That is what you might be supposed to have seen, were we to judge by the representations which are frequently made. But that is not what you have seen. You have seen the Church taking a position of determined hostility to the tyrannical measures of the Crown. You have seen the Church persecuted and borne down,—hateful innovations made upon her polity,—her most important functions suppressed,—and her voice stifled by the civil power, avowedly for the reason that she had an invincible antipathy to despotic principles of government.* You have seen the royal prerogative overstep its proper limits, and invade the

* The ground of King James VI.'s hostility to the Church of Scotland, showed itself very strikingly at the Hampton Court Conference, when Dr Reynolds was stating the propriety of ministers having occasional meetings: "You aim," said James, rudely interrupting him, "at a Scottish Presbytery, which agrees as well with monarchy, (*i. e. absolute monarchy,*) as —————. Then, Jack, and Tom, and Will, and Dick, shall meet, and, at their pleasure, censure me, my council, and all my proceedings. Stay, I pray you, one seven years, before you demand this of me."

rights of the subject, and you have seen it many times arrested in its progress, and more than once driven back, and placed under suitable restraint,—*arrested* by the bulwark which the resistance of the Church threw around the popular liberties,—*driven back* by the bold charge of an exasperated nation, under the countenance, the direction, and the management of the Church. You have seen the dethronement of a dynasty of incorrigible tyrants, and the Church assisting on the illustrious occasion ; you have seen her giving a stern opposition to the attempts which, one after another, were made to restore the exiled race of Stuart, and instrumental, in a great degree, of preserving the attachment of the Scottish people to the constitutional sway of the House of Brunswick. You have seen patriots arise, who were patriots indeed,—who lived to maintain their country's rights, and who, to maintain these rights, could die ; and, upon inquiry, you have found that they were the leading ministers and elders of their day,—the Melvilles, the Bruces, the Calderwoods, the Rutherfords, the Guthries, the Warristons, the Argyles, of the Established Church of Scotland. And finally, you have seen that the very liberty, of which the opponents of the Church now avail themselves to agitate for her overthrow, is the offspring of her unexampled exertions and sacrifices.

The Church of Scotland has, moreover, signalised herself *by contending for the religious privileges of the people*. With what eminent success she laboured to rescue the people from the grasp of the Papacy,

and to expel from their last refuge the superstitions of Rome, it is unnecessary at any length to detail. It was in 1560 that she was constituted by Parliament the spiritual guardian of the kingdom, and charged with the duty of eradicating a faith, which had been found alike destructive to the civil and religious interests of the country. She was not slow to execute her task. Under her auspices, and by her instrumentality, the scriptures circulated through every province and city and parish, education advanced, godly ministers multiplied, Protestantism grew, and more and more prevailed. Knowing that she had a subtle and indefatigable enemy to deal with, she did not sleep at her post. When all besides had been lulled into security, she alone remained suspicious and watchful; and, when others were dreaming of no evil, she descried the little cloud,—no bigger than a man's hand,—and gave warning to prepare for the storm. The celebrated National Covenant was a device of hers, in order to pledge the nation more strongly in favour of Protestantism, to cement a union among the different classes of society for its maintenance and extension, and to frustrate the operations of Popish intrigue. Consider the results with which her labours were crowned. Where was the Reformation so complete as in Scotland,—where did such unanimity prevail in the rejection of Popery,—where were the contents of the Bible so extensively known, or the doctrines of pure Christianity so universally embraced? Scotland was looked up to with reverence and admiration by

the Protestant world ; foreigners pointed to her as the model of a Reformed State ; they greeted her as a second Philadelphia, *—the object of the special favour of God.

Call to mind the extraordinary efforts of the Church against a prelatical faction, which, aided by the whole influence and power of the Crown, persevered, for more than a hundred years, in attempting to domineer over a nation that loathed them. Her first struggle in behalf of that Scriptural polity to which the people were devotedly attached, came to an end in the year 1592, when she wrung from the Court a legal recognition of her Presbyterian government. Her next struggle lasted till 1638 ; when, in her General Assembly, nothing daunted by the threats and denunciations of the organs of Royalty, she asserted her spiritual independence, condemned the usurpations and encroachments by which her original polity had been set aside, and, in a few short weeks, stript of its trappings, and laid low in the dust, a hierarchy, which it had taken forty years of tyranny to rear and adorn. Her final struggle was the most remarkable of all. It commenced in 1660, and terminated only at the era of the Revolution. I do not mean to describe it, or to rehearse the annals of its martyrdoms. But there is one fact which must be mentioned, were it only to demonstrate what it is *possible* for an Established Church to do, by the best of all methods, namely, by a reference to what it has actually done.

* Rev. iii. 7—12.

An Established Church, we are often given to understand, is a necessarily selfish, avaricious body; incapable of any generous, noble deed; and ready to go to any extent of servility, for the purpose of retaining its endowment. Now it would be very wrong in an Established Church to despise endowment, considering those great Christian ends for the full attainment of which endowment is necessary. But the history of the Church of Scotland proves that the ministers of an Established Church can part with their endowment, when it cannot be enjoyed without a sacrifice of principle. At the Restoration of Prelacy in 1661, the ministers were ordered to receive collation to their charges from the bishops, in testimony of their acquiescence in the new order of things. What followed? Between three and four hundred of them, that is, nearly half the clergy of Scotland, at once resigned their livings, rather than comply. The Presbyterian Church of Scotland renounced her endowment, rather than renounce her principles, and betook herself to sojourn for a time in the moors, among the glens, and upon the mountains. And Alexander Peden was right when he said, that *wherever a few praying people were seen by a dyke-side, there was the Church of Scotland.*

It must awaken a crowd of deeply interesting recollections on the part of such as know her history, when reminded that the Church of Scotland is an *Anti-patronage Church*. The first declaration of her Anti-patronage principles appears in one of the earliest documents which she put forth to the world,—the First

Book of Discipline. It was the Church herself that gave the original impulse to the Anti-patronage cause. When some degenerate churchman scoffs at the people for hating patronage, he should be told that it was the Church herself that taught them. In her Second Book of Discipline, she held it up as a fragment of the edifice of Popish usurpation, and declared that "God's word," and "gude order," and the rights of the people, demanded its removal. When, in 1638, she had regained her freedom of speech, one of the first uses she made of it was to protest against the settlement of ministers contrary to the will of the congregations. Nor was that all. She considered that, while patronage existed, there would be no security for the liberties of the people, and therefore she took steps to have it modified, and ultimately done away. In 1642, she had so far succeeded, as to procure an agreement, on the part of the Crown, that one out of a list of six, to be furnished by presbyteries, should be appointed in the case of Royal presentations. By and by, the list was reduced to three; and in 1649, she obtained an Act of Parliament, that swept the obnoxious system wholly away, and enacted that the settlement of ministers should thenceforth take place, "*at the suit and calling of the congregation.*" But the history of her anti-patronage doings ends not with this consummation. The parliament of 1661, which destroyed the liberties of the Church, snatched from the people the privilege which the Church had obtained for them, and once more subjected their necks to the yoke. At

the end of twenty-eight years, the hand of oppression was paralyzed, the Church was restored to her rights, and the people were again set free. Her fidelity to the popular cause had to pass through yet another ordeal, by the reintroduction of patronage in 1712; and she did not, on this important occasion, disappoint the expectations which her former proceedings had justified. Repeatedly she memorialized the Crown, petitioned the Legislature, sent a deputation to London, imploring redress. In her General Assembly, she solemnly redeclared it as her principle, that the concurrence of the parishioners was an indispensable prerequisite to the collation of a minister to a vacant charge. And for a long series of years, she raised an annual testimony against the law of patronage, by instructing the Commission to watch for the first favourable opportunity of getting it repealed. A disposition to support it is of modern growth in the Church. From the preceding statements it appears that such a disposition must be regarded as a plant in an uncongenial soil; and recent events sufficiently indicate that a blight is passing over it, and that it is destined very soon to wither and die. When *that* takes place, the Church of Scotland will be herself again.

3d, Finally, the Church of Scotland is the Church of the People, *in consequence of what the people have done for her.*

The people assisted in *reforming* the Church. This was particularly the case at the period of what is called the Second Reformation. The first out-breaking of pub-

lic feeling, against the unscriptural ceremonies which it had been attempted to introduce, arose from the warm zeal of an aged woman, whose name is now inseparably associated with the history of that memorable era.* To the support of the people, the famous Glasgow Assembly was indebted for the success which attended its stand in behalf of its own freedom and independence, when it protested against, and disregarded, the abrupt dissolution of its meeting, pronounced by his Majesty's Commissioner. To the same support was the Assembly indebted, for being enabled to pro-

* Janet Geddes belonged to that worthy class of females which enjoys, by prescriptive right, the privilege of occupying the pulpit stairs and passages of our churches. Janet, as was her wont, was seated upon a stool in one of the passages of the High Church of St. Giles, when the Dean of Edinburgh made his appearance, for the first time in the canonical dress, to introduce the new service-book,—which from that day forward was appointed to regulate the worship of the Church of Scotland. Janet looked and listened, listened and looked, till her indignation broke through all restraint,—“*Villain!*” she cried, “*wilt thou say mass at my lug?*” and, following up the words with a suitable energy of action, she flung her stool at the offending ecclesiastic. In a moment all was confusion; and the example of Janet Geddes found a thousand imitators in a congregation, whose feelings were already outraged by the attempt to coerce them into conformity with a mode of church order, to which they entertained an invincible and well-founded aversion. Thus began those popular and national demonstrations, which terminated in the overthrow of Episcopacy, and the restoration of Presbyterian worship and government.

ceed with the redress of grievances, the removal of corruptions, and the remedying of abuses, which obstructed the usefulness, marred the beauty, and degraded the character of the Church. And to the devotedness of the people, as a covenanted nation, was it, in a great measure, to be ascribed, under God, that the ends of the Covenant were so extensively accomplished, in the speedier advancement of Protestantism, the decrease of immorality, and the spread of pure and undefiled religion.

The people *fought and died* for the Church. They preferred her well-being above their chief joy. Their lives were not dear to them for her sake. They stood on every side a wall of defence, and her assailants could only reach her by wading through their blood.

It was the people who at length *established* the Church. An Episcopalian Church was ever the favourite of the Court and the nobles. To this day, a great proportion of the aristocracy of Scotland are Episcopalians. Why, then, have we a Presbyterian Church? The answer is, that the *people* would have it so. The Court and the aristocracy sought to gratify their own predilection; but the repugnance of the people could not be overcome. The plainness and the bold independence of the present Church of Scotland they disliked extremely—they persecuted her—they tried to destroy her. And why did they not succeed? Because they had the people against them. Around the object of their hatred the people rallied; by the people it was rescued; by the people it was raised to the

dignity of an Establishment. Through a long century the Court and the people struggled ; the Court, for *its* Church, and the people, for *their* Church. Victory was doubtful ; sometimes seeming to declare in favour of the one side, and anon inclining to the other. But, at last, the final crisis came ; after a period of apparent faintness and exhaustion, the people rose—like Samson, when his hair was grown—and, by an effort, which shook the kingdom and ejected the occupant of the throne, made their Church triumphant. The Revolution king began his reign by declaring that he would “ settle by law that Church government in this kingdom, *which was most agreeable to the inclinations of the people ;*” and, without delay, those statutes were passed, which are yet in force for maintaining the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

The people *prayed* for the Church of Scotland. Never was godly Israelite more earnest in his wrestlings for “ the Daughter of Zion,” than were the pious commons of Scotland for their beloved Church. A prominent place in the supplications of the family and the closet was constantly given to her interests : and the dangers that threatened her, the grievances that vexed her, and the defections into which she had been betrayed, were to them the occasion of many additional visits to the throne of grace. The people of the neighbouring kingdom of England made good use of their privilege of petitioning their temporal rulers relative to civil affairs ; but the Scottish people meanwhile plied the nobler exercise of invoking the favour-

able regard and merciful interposition of the God of heaven for that plant of renown, under whose shade they and their fathers had worshipped, and which stands to this day,—thanks be to Him who heard their requests!—the survivor of the storms of nearly 300 years. We perceive the secret of our Church's strength—what it is that has made her victorious in many an unequal conflict, and has hitherto enabled her, against fearful odds, to keep her place in this division of the island—when we look to the prevalence among the people of a spirit of prayer on her behalf—to the mighty intercessions of unnumbered thousands, who were poor in this world, but rich in faith. “There was never a time,” writes a female in humble life, about the beginning of last century, “that I got liberty, or any thing like nearness to God, but the Church of Scotland lay nearest my heart.” On another occasion she says, “I enjoyed a sweet while of communion with God; clouds were removed, and I got leave to plead for my mother Church, that He would make Jerusalem a quiet habitation.” “When I was pleading for the Church of Scotland, *Christ's married spouse, and my mother*,” says the same individual, “that word came with power, ‘Ask what you will and it shall be granted to you;’ where I was strengthened to put up these requests:—That God, for Christ's sake, would preserve the ark among us pure, without the mixture of popery, prelacy,..... and errors in doctrine and worship. *O, let us be a Church and nation as long as the sun and moon*

endure. Revive thy covenant work among us. O, come back with days of thy wonted power, and let the womb of the Gospel become fruitful, and bring forth many sons and daughters to Christ.* Such is but a sample of the spirit that animated the population of our country. We cannot wonder that a Church, whose cause was thus powerfully pleaded, should have gotten many glorious deliverances, and should now, notwithstanding the sins she has committed, be receiving tokens that the Lord has not forsaken her.

If ever Church, then, could be called the People's Church, the Church of Scotland deserves that name. Yet the people are solicited to join the league for her overthrow. "What!" methinks I hear them say, "shall we lift our hands against a Church to whose undaunted bearing, public spirit, and unquenchable zeal for the national welfare, all our blessings, civil and religious, are to be traced? Shall we confederate against our benefactress? No! Go elsewhere for your allies! Go to him who would perpetuate ignorance; for *he* cannot admire her. Go to the enemy of freedom; for *he* cannot be her friend. Go to the infidel; for *he* owes her no favour. Go to the papist; for *he* bears against her a deadly grudge. But come not to the *people* of Scotland, whom she has laid under most deep and lasting obligations! *'If we forget Jerusalem, let our right hands forget their cunning. If we do not remember her, let our tongues*

* Memoirs of Elizabeth West.

cleave to the roof of our mouths.' You may pretend great regard for the people, but we believe you not. If you wished us well, you would not entice us to the perpetration of our own dishonour, or seek to make us a byword, a hissing, a scorn,—an object to which mankind might point the finger and say,—‘ Their fathers shed their best blood in defence of the Church ; after a period of unrivalled effort, and incredible toil, achieved her establishment ; implored the protection and the blessing of heaven for her, in many a fervid supplication ; left her, thus hallowed, as the most precious legacy which it was in their power to bequeath ; and see ! she falls, she perishes, the victim of the hatred and the madness of the unnatural descendants !’ Away, ye tempters ! We reject, we detest, your proposals ! We will give no countenance to your schemes. Do you wish to *reform* her ? We will assist you. The people contributed to her reformation before, and they are ready to do so again. Are you bent upon increasing her strength and enlarging her means of usefulness ? You may confidently reckon upon our aid. Our fathers secured to her that measure of support from the State which was requisite in their day, and we shall gladly go along with you in applying to the Legislature for such additional support as existing circumstances render necessary. But we will never agree to destroy her ! God forbid that she should ever be destroyed, or that we should not be found among her defenders in the hour of her peril ! Desist, desist, from your unholy enterprize. Touch

not the Church with your sacrilegious hands! *Our Jerusalem is a tabernacle which you shall not take down; not so much as one of the stakes thereof shall you ever remove, neither shall any of its cords be broken."*

THE END.

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327

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